Top Tips for Presenting
By Abbie Jackson

1. **Know your audience**

   Think about who will be in the room and how best to influence them. Each person in there will have a different preference for how they like to receive information, so the more you know about them, the better able you will be to make the presentation fit the audience.

2. **Keep the slides on point**

   If you are using slides as a visual aid, make sure these are not cluttered with text, and that whatever is on them is key to your point. Our brains love to work in threes, so if you can, aim for that!

3. **Prepare yourself**

   When presenting, it's easy to focus your preparation on WHAT you are going to say. It is equally important to prepare HOW you are going to say it. So take some time beforehand to think about what you need to do to ensure that you have thought about your physical state when you go in.

4. **Deep breaths**

   It might sound obvious, but doing breathing exercises in the hours and minutes leading up to a presentation will ensure that your adrenaline levels remain lower and therefore positively affect your physiological responses to keep nerves in check. It is a great way of reminding your brain that you are calm and that you are in control. Try breathing in for four seconds, then out for seven seconds. Do this several times in a row.

5. **Personalise your presentation**

   We're all human, and when someone is presenting, we love to know more about them. So if you can, share a story or an anecdote that's relevant to help the audience connect with the person they are listening to.

6. **Reframe the fear**

   It's normal to feel nervous before you present. It's evolutionarily built into us to not want to stand out from the group. But presenting is a great opportunity to build your brand, to show your strengths and to talk about the work you are doing. You will only improve through doing, so keep it in perspective, push through the nerves and go for it!

7. Be tech savvy

Don't let a missing wire, or a wifi glitch be the thing that derails you. Ask questions before you arrive about what the tech will be so you have everything you need. Try to ensure that someone in the know will be around to help should you have an issue and if you can, get into the room a bit early so that the tech set up is pressure free.

8. Time it to perfection

Don't go on forever, but don't feel the need to rush. It's critical to manage the time you have so that you are able to get your message across succinctly. This requires planning and practice. Nerves will often make you want to speed up, but if you have planned your timings, you can confidently deliver the presentation to the time you have allocated.

9. Body language matters

Look your audience in the eyes, smile when they enter the room and stand up straight. If you can connect immediately with the people you are speaking to, everyone in the room will relax, including you!

10. Structure and objectives

When planning a presentation, ask yourself what your objectives are for this, and also what are the objectives of the people you are speaking to. This will help you to clarify what's important and what needs to be included. Once you have set your objectives, work out a structure for the presentation so that there is a clear beginning, middle and end. This will help you to design it, and help the audience to follow you.