



Presentation





Welcome to *UP Skills for Work!*

The program helps you build your skills for learning, work, and life, which include:

- Motivation
- Attitude
- Accountability
- Presentation
- Collaboration
- Time Management
- Adaptability
- Stress Management
- Reading
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Digital
- Problem Solving
- Confidence
- Communication
- Creativity and Innovation

These skills are used in nearly every job and in daily life. They also allow us to learn new skills and to adapt to changes. Improving your skills can help you to build a good life for yourself.

You can also take these courses on [ABCskillshub.ca](https://www.abcskillshub.ca)

This workshop

How we present ourselves has a big effect on how people see us, especially when they don't know us well.

In this workshop, we will explore how to present ourselves in a way that fits the needs of our job. We'll look at the different things that make up our presentation. We'll also talk about some challenges you might have with presentation and how to work through them.

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UPOSPRE2024-05-06-2-EN

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Distributed to organizations across Canada by ABC Life Literacy Canada.

Partners in development of *UP Skills for Work*:

Content developed in collaboration with Futureworx Society.



This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Skills for Success Program.

UP Skills for Work was developed with support from founding sponsor Canada Life.



What is presentation?

Presentation is a word with many different meanings. At work, a spoken report or PowerPoint slideshow might be called a “presentation.” That’s not what we are talking about here.

In this workshop, we are talking about how we present ourselves so that people will see us in a positive way. When we say that someone “makes a good impression,” we mean they present themselves well.



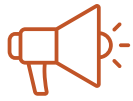
Presentation is how you look and sound to other people.

Presentation can help you succeed at work. Different jobs and workplaces have different expectations about what people should wear, their manners, and even their grooming. Cultural differences also affect what is seen as appropriate. So presenting yourself can be tricky!



Let’s talk about it

- How do you define success at work?
- How important is good presentation to your success at work?
- Can you think of a job where you might need to present yourself quite differently from the way you are at home?
- Can you think of a job where a worker’s presentation doesn’t matter as much?
- Are the impressions we form based on presentation alone always right? Are they always fair? Why or why not?



Warm up

Can you think of a person you've met who presented themselves very well?

In small groups of 2 or 3, describe how this person presented themselves.

What are some things mentioned in your group that were part of a good presentation? Write them in the chart below.

What good presentation looks and sounds like

What they did or said	Good presentation
Looked like this	
Sounded like this	



Getting started

Put a check mark beside the statement that sounds most like you.

I think I present myself well.

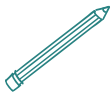
I care about presentation, but sometimes I struggle with it.

I know how to present myself well, but there are reasons why I can't always do it (such as time or cost).

I don't think much about my presentation. I'm just being myself.

I could improve my presentation.

None of the above. Here's my situation:



Something to think about

We've all had times when our presentation at work could have been better. Why is good presentation sometimes a challenge? Think about, or discuss with your group, some challenges in your current job or one you have had in the past. Write about your challenges below.



Language at work

Language can be formal or casual. It can be friendly or businesslike.

Many factors affect the way we speak:

- Our age
- Our education
- Our cultural background
- Whether we are speaking our first language, or a second, third, or fourth language

The language we use also changes with the situation. Maybe you use slang words when talking with your friends, but not with your coworkers. As adults, we may speak differently to a young child, at formal events like a religious service, and when relaxing at home.

For some jobs, we need to use different language at work than we do at home or with our friends.



Meet Leland

"Hey, how ya doing?" Leland greeted the first guests with his usual friendliness. He had just started work as the doorman at an expensive hotel.

At his last job, working the counter at a muffler repair shop, he got along well with both customers and his coworkers. But now his new manager pulled him aside.

"Don't speak to our guests like that," she said. "They aren't your buddies at the bar!"

If you were Leland, what would you think is the best way to greet hotel guests?



Let's talk about it

Most workplaces don't have written rules about what kind of language is acceptable – but most have unwritten rules.

- How can you tell what style of language is okay in a new job?
- Are there some kinds of language that are never okay at work?
- Is it fair to make how we talk, or the words we use, a job requirement?



Dress and hygiene

Everybody knows they should come to work clean and dressed properly for the job. But it's not so simple! Good **hygiene, appropriate dress,** and **grooming** can vary a lot, depending on where you work.

- Carlo looks after the grounds and gardens for local businesses. In his work, dirty fingernails and muddy boots come with the job. And as long as he doesn't wear a T-shirt with a slogan that might offend a customer, he can wear what he wants.
- Anita is a fast food cook. She has a lot more rules to follow than Carlo. She wears a uniform and her hair must be covered with a hair net. She washes her hands many times a day.
- Renée works at a manicure salon. She has to make sure her fingernails are always perfectly shaped and polished.

Workplaces have a culture that includes expectations for how you should dress.



If you're not sure what the expected dress code is, it's okay to ask!



Appropriate dress is clothing that is well suited to the job and fits in with the way your coworkers dress.

Hygiene is being clean so you don't pass on germs. It also means being careful about smells.

Grooming is how you style things like your nails and hair.



Let's talk about it

The way we dress and style ourselves expresses who we are. It is personal. It can also express our culture or religion.

At work, your grooming and clothes may affect how clients or customers see the business, and whether or not people view you as being a professional person.

- Why is it important to be willing to adapt to a workplace culture by dressing appropriately?
- Many workplaces say employees should dress in “business casual” clothes or be “neat and clean.” What does that mean to you? Give examples of what you might wear.
- When an employer’s dress code is different than your own style, it is hard to know what to do. Which rules on the list below do you think are reasonable or not reasonable? Are there any you would not agree to?
 - No sleeveless shirts
 - Tattoos hidden from sight
 - No hats or head coverings
 - “Business clothes” (dress pants, shirt and jacket for men, dress pants or skirt and coordinating top for women.)
 - No large, dangling jewelry
 - No big beards



Be sensitive to scent

In many workplaces today, workers are asked **not** to wear strong perfume or aftershave. Many people have an allergy to perfumes, and others find strong scents unpleasant.



Meet Sadya

Sadya has a new job as a server in a busy bar where she can earn lots of tips. But she is not happy to learn that the owner has a dress code. He wants his female staff to wear tight, low-cut tops, short skirts, and plenty of makeup.

"I don't want to dress that way," she tells her girlfriend. "But I want the job. I don't know what to do."

Do you think what Sadya's boss is asking her to wear is okay? Why or why not?

Did you know?



Each province in Canada has a Human Rights Code that does not allow discrimination because of gender, religion, etc. If your employer asks you not to wear important religious or cultural items, this may go against the Human Rights Code.

In Ontario, the Human Rights Commission recently ruled that employers should not require female employees to wear revealing clothing. There is a guide for employers here: <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ohrc-policy-position-sexualized-and-gender-specific-dress-codes>

To access the link you can also type 'gender specific dress code human rights commission' in your Google search.

For further information on the Human Rights Act in Canada, go here: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/>

To access the link you can also type 'human rights act Canada' in your Google search.



Manners

What do **good manners** mean to you? You might think of:

- Saying “please” and “thank-you”
- Offering food when people come to your home
- Shaking hands when you first meet another person
- Listening and not interrupting when someone is talking

Write any other examples you can think of below.

-
-
-

Good manners can be very formal, or easygoing. So what are good manners in the workplace, and why are they important?



Having **good manners** or being polite is one way we show respect for others. They help other people to feel comfortable around us.

Good manners reduce conflict and help everyone to get along with each other.



Let's talk about it

When people are working together, what are some ways to show good manners? Think of a job you have had, or a job you would like to have. What are some ways in which we can make sure people we work with feel supported and comfortable without hurting our own level of comfort?



Meet Anna

Anna works in a department store. She is almost finished unpacking a new shipment of clothes, when she sees that she has put the wrong price on a whole box of jeans. She will have to remove the price tags and start over.

She is rushing to finish when Tracy, her coworker, comes by. "Hey Anna, guess what I'm doing this weekend?" she asks.

"I'm busy!" says Anna without looking up.

Later Anna's boss calls her over. "You were rude to Tracy," she says. "I expect staff to be polite to each other, as well as the customers."



Let's talk about it

- What's going on in this situation?
- How else could Anna tell Tracy she doesn't have time to talk?



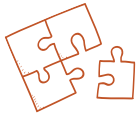
Manners are cultural

Based on a true story.

A company that owned a call centre in Canada and one in India had a training session for both groups of employees. They all listened to the same recorded calls and rated how well the customer service representatives had done. They found an interesting difference in the two groups.

- The Canadian group said some customer service representatives were friendly and helpful. But the Indian group thought those same customer service representatives were too casual with customers. The Indian group thought that being that casual was rude.
- The Indian group rated some customer service representatives as polite and respectful. The Canadian group thought those same reps were too stiff and formal.

Some aspects of good manners are just customs. People from different cultures can have different ideas of what is rude and what is polite.



Putting it together

If you were the manager of the people in the chart below, how would you want them to present themselves? Write about:

- What kind of language would be best for this kind of job? Casual? Professional?
- How would you like them to dress?
- How important is cleanliness?
- Are there other grooming requirements?
- What are “good manners” for this job?

Different jobs and presentation

Job	Language	Dress	Hygiene and grooming	Manners
Healthcare assistant				
Hair stylist				
Construction worker				
Call centre agent				
Cab driver				



Presenting yourself at a job interview

Presentation is very important in job interviews. Employers want to know about your experience and training, but they are also trying to learn about your personal qualities, for example:

- Will you get along well with your coworkers?
- Will you give customers a good impression of the company?
- Will you listen carefully and follow instructions?

So it's a good idea to be a bit more formal with your presentation at the interview, even if the workplace itself is casual:

- Dress a little better than you might at work
- Avoid slang and swearing
- Take care with your manners
- Make sure your hair, hands and fingernails are clean and neat



It's okay to be nervous at a job interview.
Everyone is!

Did you know?



Meeting and greeting

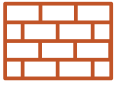
Job interviews begin with introducing yourself. In most jobs in North America, here's how you can make a good first impression:

- Say hello and tell them your name
- Smile and make eye contact
- Offer to shake hands
- Thank them for meeting with you



Activity

Think about how you would introduce yourself in an interview. Where would your eyes go? Would you smile or wait until the interviewer smiled first? If you are comfortable, practice introducing yourself with a partner, then switch. Give feedback to each other on how well you did each part of the greeting. Then try again.



Barriers to presentation

A barrier is something that stands in the way of finishing a task or reaching a goal. It's one thing to understand that presentation is important. That doesn't mean it's easy to achieve! Some people experience barriers that make it harder to present themselves well.



Meet David

After years working temporary and seasonal labouring jobs, David goes back to school and trains as a chef. He is thrilled to be hired on at a great restaurant.

But the restaurant expects chefs to buy their own safety shoes and uniforms, and to have their own top-quality knives. These are very expensive, and David can't afford to buy them. He's already in debt from his classes.



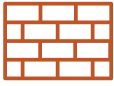
Let's talk about it

Cost is one barrier to good presentation. If a job requires certain clothes or equipment, or very polished grooming, that can be very expensive.

What are some other barriers that can get in the way of appropriate presentation at work? Consider what might affect a person's language, dress and hygiene, or manners?

Examples to consider:

- Teresa has three young children and a long bus ride to work. Rena is single and lives 15 minutes away. How could this affect their presentation at work?
- Omar has recently moved to Canada from Syria. His spoken and written English is basic, and he doesn't always understand Canadian customs.
- Keisha struggles with her shyness. She tends to keep her head down and avoid eye contact with other people, unless she knows them well.



What are your barriers?

Are there things in your life that make good presentation more difficult? Think about what those barriers are. If you wish, you can write them down below.

Barriers to using appropriate work language.

Barriers to appropriate dress, hygiene, and grooming.

Barriers to using good manners.



Where to get help

In many cities, help is available with at least some barriers. Here are some examples:

Language

- If English or French is your second language, a local newcomer agency can help you find a language class or a volunteer tutor to help you improve. (To find one, do an internet search of “English” or “French” plus “settlement agency” or “newcomer agency” plus your city.)
- If you need to polish your English or French, your employment counsellor may be able to direct you to an upgrading course on “business English/French” or basic grammar.

Dress

- For women, “Dress for Success” provides interview outfits and some starting job outfits in many cities. Ask your employment counsellor for a referral. <https://dressforsuccess.org>
- For men in the Toronto area, “Dress Your Best” provides high quality interview/work clothes. You need to be referred by a non-profit agency who has partnered with Dress Your Best. <http://www.dressyourbest.ca/aboutus.php>
- In Vancouver, “Working Gear” does the same and also provides construction-related work clothes. <https://workinggear.ca/>
- In addition to well-known used clothing stores like Taleze and Value Village, many cities have smaller used clothing stores that specialize in higher quality, more formal wear.

Manners

- Many newcomer agencies offer “New to Canada” programs where you can learn about Canadian customs, including manners.



Congratulations!

You've completed the *UP Skills for Work* **Presentation** workbook. You've taken a step in building skills for learning, work, and life.

What did you learn about presentation? What would you like to improve?

For the last activity, we hope you will make a **pledge** to continue building your presentation skills.



A **pledge** is a serious promise to yourself or to others.

The pledge can be personal, or you can share it with others.

My pledge

I pledge to work on my presentation skills by:

Sometimes a pledge needs an **action plan**: a list of steps you'll take to make your pledge happen.

My action plan

What do I need to do first?

Who will support me?

How will I overcome setbacks and obstacles?