



ESL Podcast 57 – Making a Presentation

GLOSSARY

stage fright – the fear of talking or acting in front of a group of people; the anxiety one feels about speaking in front of an audience

* Larita hated talking to large groups of people because she always got stage fright and did not know what to say.

butterflies – a term used to describe the queasy or unstable feeling that develops in the stomach when one is nervous or excited

* Chet was so excited about going out with a girl he likes a lot that he got butterflies in his stomach.

projector – a machine that takes an image and displays a larger version on a wall or flat surface so that a group of people can see that image

* Mr. Littleton used a projector to show the students the photographs he had on his computer.

PowerPoint – a computer program that creates visual presentations; a computer program that creates images with information that one can use during a presentation or speech

* Beatris used PowerPoint during the meeting to present her points more clearly.

to clear (one's) voice – to cough or make another action that removes mucus (the thick, sticky liquid made by the nose) from one's throat, letting one talk in louder and clearer tone

* Lee's voice was scratchy and hard to hear, so he cleared his voice and repeated what he said.

present – the state of being in a specific location; existing or being at an event or location

* All of the students were present in class and ready for the exam.

clicker – remote control; a small device that allows someone to control a machine from a distance

* Estrella used a clicker to change the image on her computer from the other side of the room.

slide – a single screen or image in a presentation with multiple screens or images

* The presentation had nine slides, and each one displayed different information.



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to feel free – to feel as though one can do something without special permission

* Benjamin was very close to his best friend's family, so he felt free to visit their house without an invitation.

to flip – to move through something quickly; to turn or change something quickly

* Lucinda did not want to read the entire magazine, so she flipped through the pages to see if there were any stories that were particularly interesting to read.

main point – the most important information; the information one should focus on when given a large amount of information

* The sermon lasted for 30 minutes, but the pastor's main point was that everyone should be kind to the people around them.

bullet point – a short statement on a list of statements; information that has been shortened so that it can fit onto a list

* Domenic did not have enough time to read the entire report, so he read over the bullet points instead.

attention – focus; the act of focusing on what someone else is doing or saying

* Cassidy gave her brother her attention when he asked her for advice.

contact information – information about how to call, e-mail, or write to someone; details about how to talk to someone again if needed

* The patient's contact information let the doctor know where the patient lived and what the patient's phone number was.

handout – a document that gives someone certain information; a document passed or "handed out" to people before, during, or after a presentation

* Keith gave the audience a handout before starting his presentation because he wanted them to have the information on paper in front of them as he spoke.

whew – a sound made to express relief

* When the difficult exam was over, Tatiana shouted, "Whew! I'm glad that's over!"



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CULTURE NOTE

The Effects of Sunshine

A 2009 article in the magazine *Psychology Today* talked about all the different ways that research has “indicated” (shown) sunshine affects us. Here are some of them:

- We tend to feel more “generous” (giving to others) and want to help people on sunny days. People leave bigger “tips” (extra money to someone who is giving you service, such as a waiter in a restaurant) on days when the sun is shining.
- “Admission committees” (people at colleges and universities who make decisions about which students will get to study there) are more likely to select students who seem to have good “social skills” (are friendly, outgoing, sociable) on days when it is sunny. But on “cloudy days” (days with little sun), students who have a better “academic record” (performance in school, such as grades and test scores) are more likely to be “admitted” (accepted into the university). Note that in American universities, your academic record is not the only thing that determines whether or not you will be admitted. Admission committees look at many different factors, including your “extracurricular” (outside of school) activities, such as “volunteering” (working for a good cause without pay) and sports.
- The “stock market” (a place where you can buy and sell partial ownership in companies) tends to go up when it’s sunny in the city where the stock market is located.
- People buy fewer “lottery tickets” (tickets that the government sells that give you a chance to win a lot of money; a type of official gambling) on sunny days. Some people feel better when they buy a lottery ticket, thinking that they are going to win, but on sunny days, people don’t need this extra “lift” (increase in good feeling).
- On sunny days, we are less likely to try to lift our “mood” (our feelings) by using alcohol, coffee, tobacco, and chocolate.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 57 – Making a Presentation.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 57. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss giving a presentation for a business meeting or for a class in school. Let's get started.

[start of story]

I don't normally get stage fright, but the thought of getting up in front of my colleagues to give a presentation always gives me butterflies. But I have no choice; my boss asked me to do it, so I will.

I set up my projector and PowerPoint program on my laptop. Clearing my voice, I stood up and addressed the 10 people present at the meeting. I started off by saying, "Good afternoon. I want to thank you for inviting me to talk to you today." I had a clicker in my hand to advance the slides. "Today I'm going to talk to you about our new product, Provasic. Please feel free to ask questions as we go along," I said.

I then flipped through the slides showing pictures of our product, and concluded by summarizing the main points of my talk with bullet points. I finished by saying, "Thank you for your attention today. My contact information is on your handout." Whew! I was glad that was over!

[end of story]

We talked today about giving a presentation at a business meeting, for example. I started by saying that I don't normally get "stage fright." "Stage fright," two words, is when you get scared or nervous when you have to stand up in front of other people and talk. A "stage," you know, is a place where you have a play in a theater, and "fright" is another word for "to be afraid." "Stage fright," then, is to be afraid of the stage, but here we use it more generally to mean anytime you are nervous, or anxious, or scared about standing up and talking to a group of people.



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I said that I had to get up in front of – or stand up in front of – “my colleagues.” “My colleagues,” a noun, refers to the people that I work with or that are in the same profession as I am, the same job type as I am. These are my colleagues.

I said that when I have to get up in front to give a presentation, I always get “butterflies,” or it “gives me butterflies.” A “butterfly” is an insect that has beautiful wings. It’s small and many people – some people – try to catch butterflies with a big net. A “butterfly” comes originally from a cocoon and then it is sort of born out of a little cocoon, or little shell. Well, when we say, “I have butterflies in my stomach,” we mean that I feel – my stomach feels – a little bit nauseated. That is, I don’t feel very well. My stomach isn’t feeling very well because I am nervous, because I am scared of something. Usually, when you have to give a presentation, people get nervous, and sometimes they get “butterflies in their stomach.” It’s the expression we use to say that you’re starting to feel a little sick because you are so nervous.

“I set up my projector” – or I got my projector ready – for my “PowerPoint program.” A “projector” is a machine with a lens that shows the picture on a larger screen. You can have a “movie projector” – a projector in a movie theater. You can have a projector at a meeting connected to your computer. It shows something up on a big screen, a place where you watch a movie or look at pictures. “PowerPoint,” you probably know, is Microsoft software that is used for giving presentations.

I said I started my presentation by “clearing my voice.” “To clear your voice” means to go like this (clears voice), meaning to clear it so that you can speak more clearly. So, “to clear your voice” means to do what I just did so that your voice sounds better. I said that I stood up and I “addressed the 10 people present at the meeting.” “To address” means to talk to a group of people. I said they were “10 people present,” meaning 10 people who are there physically at the meeting. That word “present” means a gift, but here it means, it can also mean, to be somewhere, to actually be physically in a place. “There were students present at the – in the classroom.” That’s the meaning of “present” here.

I started off by saying, “Good afternoon. I want to thank you for inviting me to talk to you today.” “To start off” means to begin, you probably know. The expression “I want to thank you for inviting me” is a common way of starting a presentation if you were, in fact, invited to give a presentation. You start, often, by thanking people. “I want to thank you for inviting me today.”



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I then said that I had “a clicker in my hand to advance the slides.” When you’re giving a presentation like a PowerPoint presentation, a “clicker” is a little device, usually smaller than your hand, that has buttons on it so you can go forward or backward in terms of the pictures or the “slides” that you are showing. In a PowerPoint presentation, we call each screen or each picture, if you will, a “slide.” Well, you can “advance the slides,” meaning go forward from one to two to three. You can also go back in your slides to go backwards: three, two, one. A clicker allows you to go back or forward. It’s usually like a remote control, really. A remote control is a clicker.

I began my talk by saying, “Today I’m going to talk to you about our new product” – a very common way of starting a presentation, after you thank people for their attention or inviting you, is to tell them what you’re going to talk about. “Today, I am going to talk to you about my new product,” whatever it is. I also used the expression, “Please feel free to ask questions.” That is a very polite way of telling someone that it’s okay for them to ask questions: to “feel free.” When someone says, “Please feel free to call me,” that means it’s okay for you to call me. I don’t mind.

I “flipped through the slides” showing pictures of my product. “To flip through” means to go through – usually, to go through more or less quickly. You can “flip through” slides. We normally – commonly, rather – talk about “flipping through a book” or “flipping through a magazine” – means you turn the pages very quickly just to get an idea about what is in the magazine or the book.

I said that I concluded “by summarizing the main points of my talk with bullet points.” “The point” of something is the main idea of something. So, when you say, “the main points,” you mean the main ideas of your talk. “Bullet points,” you probably know, “bullet points” is when, on a piece of . . . on a computer, on a word processing document, or on a slide in PowerPoint, you have little dots – little usually black dots – and these dots are “indented,” meaning they’re moved in a little bit from the edge of the page, and they’re used to list things. So, a “bullet point” is something that uses that format on a page.

I ended my presentation by saying, “Thank you for your attention today. My contact information is on your handout.” Again, a very common way of ending a presentation is to thank people for their attention. This means you are thanking them for paying attention to you, for listening to you, for not falling asleep. My students usually don’t pay attention to me. They are sleeping, or listening to their iPods, or text messaging their friends, and so forth. But you want to thank people for paying attention. “Thank you for your attention today” – it means the same.



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“My contact information” is my name, my address, my telephone number – how you can contact or get in touch with me. I said that I put my contact information on a “handout.” That’s one word (handout), a noun which means a piece of paper that you give at a presentation or in a class that has information about your presentation on it. You can have “handouts” at a conference or any sort of presentation.

I ended by saying “Whew! (I’m) glad that was over.” That little sound that I made (whew!) is spelled (whew), and it’s an exclamation, if you will. It’s a sound that we make in English to express relief. “I’m so glad this day is over. Whew!” That’s how I make the sound. Other native speakers may make it differently, but when you see it in a book or see it in writing, it’s spelled (whew).

Now let’s listen to our story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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[end of story]

Thanks to our great scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her hard work. And thanks to you for listening.

From Los Angeles, California, I’m Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.



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