Exemption Process for Strategic Presentation Skills 90-718

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hyatt@cmu.edu

1. **What is Strategic Presentation Skills (SPS) 90-718?**

This seven-week course focuses on important elements for creating and delivering presentations in professional settings. Assignments include a formal briefing, an interview, an informative speech via webinar, and impromptu speaking exercises. A variety of technology tools are utilized to research topics, organize ideas, write speeches, develop visuals and interact with the audience. This course will help students develop confidence as skilled presenters.

2. **How are exemptions for SPS 90-718 determined?**

Exemptions from Strategic Presentation Skills are determined by the quality of work. It encompasses strategic thinking and advocacy skills, not just on speaking experience. Students who wish to be considered for exemption will submit a 5-10 minute video and a copy of their visuals (see directions and grading rubrics). Students who score an A- or better on the work will be exempted. (Note: If you already have a recorded presentation, send a clip that includes your introduction and the first 10 minutes. Please do not send hour-long presentations.)

3. **Why can’t I apply for exemption later in the fall or in the spring?**

Each section of Strategic Presentation Skills is limited to ten students. Twelve sections are offered during the academic year (6 in the fall and 6 in the spring). In order to manage resources, we determine early in the fall how many instructors are needed to cover these sections and/or if we need to add or delete sections based on exemptions. Therefore, we cannot allow students to apply for exemption at later dates.

4. **Where and when do I submit my material?**

Send an email (with a link to your video and an attached file of your visuals) to Professor Kim Hyatt at hyatt@cmu.edu by **Friday, August 21 at 11:59 pm.** Submissions after this date will not be reviewed since decisions are made immediately.

**EMAIL SUBJECT LINE:** Last Name – Exemption Materials for SPS

5. **What should I discuss for this briefing?**

The content of exemption briefings should relate to some aspect of your chosen field of study (i.e. environment, management, finance, technology, economics, statistics, arts management, entertainment, etc.).

6. **What delivery style is used?**

The presentation style is extemporaneous. Speakers prepare and practice, but do not use a script when recording.

7. **Who should apply for exemption?**

- Students who have completed courses similar to Strategic Presentation Skills with a grade of A- or better.
- Students with professional communications training provided in areas such as law or consulting.
- Students without formal training who have significant presentation experiences.

**Note:** Even if you’ve taken a similar course, you must complete the exemption process outlined in this document. Exemptions are not based on a transcript.
SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR VISUALS

FORMAT

1. Start with an introductory slide that includes the title of your presentation, your name, and the date of the presentation.

2. Include a “hook” slide before your table of contents. This slide could show a picture or a chart/graph with data.

3. Include a table of contents (a “preview slide” or “agenda slide”) for the body of the briefing.

4. Include 6-8 supporting slides in the body of the presentation.
   - Make sure that the material in the body of each slide supports the claim made by the title.
   - Use message titles (aka “headlines” or “sentence titles”) for supporting slides, as recommended by RAND (Research and Development Corporation, Guidelines for Preparing Briefings). Message titles are short sentences that state the “takeaway lesson” of the slide. (i.e. “Why We Must Increase Funding for Educational Reform”)

5. End with a summary slide.

CHARTS, GRAPHS & PICTURES

1. Show how variables are related. Use tables, timelines, graphs, flowcharts, etc. to display these relationships.

2. Reduce clutter. Do not place a picture and a graph on the same slide.

WRITING

1. Use parallel construction whenever possible.

2. Proofread work for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors.

3. Do not use too many words on a slide.

4. Convert bulleted text to diagrams and charts whenever possible.

5. Cite sources, using APA style, for all data and direct quotes.

FONT

1. Use readable fonts (color and size). Do not use dark fonts on dark backgrounds or light fonts on light backgrounds.

2. Design visuals that can be seen from the back of the room. Use heavy line weights (not the default) for graphs.
   - Arial 28-36 point for titles
   - Arial 20-24 point for text
   - Arial 16 point for labels

3. Except for poetry, text should be left adjusted in text blocks.

4. Translate acronyms (i.e. Write {in full} International Monetary Fund before using IMF, the acronym).

BACKGROUND

1. Use a simple background. It should not distract from the written content or the verbal message.

2. Avoid unnecessary clip art or animation.
Competency 5: To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

5.2 Learning Outcome: Prepare professional and effective presentations appropriate to the objective and context.
5.3 Learning Outcome: Prepare communications suitable for diverse audiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY</th>
<th>MESSAGE EFFECTIVENESS</th>
<th>TIMING AND PACE</th>
<th>VERBAL SKILLS: VOCAL CONTROL AND PHRASING</th>
<th>NONVERBAL SKILLS: BODY LANGUAGE AND ATTIRE</th>
<th>EYE CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the following message components:</td>
<td>The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the following components of timing and pace:</td>
<td>The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the following verbal skills:</td>
<td>The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the following nonverbal components:</td>
<td>The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the components of eye contact:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong introduction (e.g. welcomes audience, provides credentials, builds interest)</td>
<td>• Specified interval of time</td>
<td>• Control of voice volume</td>
<td>• Appropriate posture, gestures, and facial expressions</td>
<td>• Visual contact with another person’s eyes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Organized agenda and logical sequence</td>
<td>• A consistent pace for delivery</td>
<td>• Clarity of words</td>
<td>• Appropriate vocal expressions: Does not excessively use filler words (e.g. umm, ah, like, so, etc.)</td>
<td>• Scanning the room to include audience members who may have questions or comments, and to build rapport.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Smooth verbal transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional language</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clear summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate vocal expressions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Content is prepared based on audience demographics and roles; it is suitable for diverse audiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>A+  Advanced; Professional and effective</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced use of all elements related to message effectiveness.</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced use of all timing and pacing elements.</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced use of all elements related to verbal skills.</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced use of all elements related to nonverbal skills.</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced use of all elements related to eye contact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A to A Range Professional and effective</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable content; however, the introduction, structure, transitions, and/or providing content suitable for the audience could improve.</td>
<td>Demonstrates an acceptable pace and use of time; however, timing and/or pace could improve.</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable verbal skills; however, voice volume, clarity, word choice, and/or appropriate vocal expressions could improve.</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable nonverbal skills; however, body language and/or showing professionalism through attire could improve.</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable eye contact; however, maintaining eye contact or scanning the room could improve.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B- to B+ Range Professional and effective</td>
<td>Demonstrates limited content. Modifications are needed for an effective introduction, a logical structure, smooth transitions, and/or to ensure content is suitable for the audience.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a limited control of pace and timing. One or both elements require more practice.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a limited control of verbal skills. Voice volume, clarity, word choice, and/or vocal expressions need improvement.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a limited control of nonverbal skills and/or a lack of professional attire.</td>
<td>Demonstrates limited eye contact. Presenter needs to maintain eye contact and to scan the room to include audience members who may have questions or comments, and to build rapport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C- to C+ Range Unsatisfactory Professional and effective</td>
<td>Does not meet the minimal course standards for “Message Effectiveness.”</td>
<td>Does not meet the minimal course standards for “Timing and Pace.”</td>
<td>Does not meet the minimal course standards for “Verbal Skills.”</td>
<td>Does not meet the minimal course standards for “NonVerbal Skills.”</td>
<td>Does not meet the minimal course standards for “Eye Contact.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>A+</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B-</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C-</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-77</td>
<td>76-64</td>
<td>63-60</td>
<td>59-55</td>
<td>54-44</td>
<td>43-40</td>
<td>39-35</td>
<td>34-24</td>
<td>23-20</td>
<td>19-0</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Score ___________ x 2 = ___________ / 80 points
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMAT</th>
<th>CHARTS, GRAPHS &amp; PICTURES</th>
<th>WRITING</th>
<th>FONTS</th>
<th>BACKGROUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction (3 slides)</td>
<td>• Started with an introductory slide that includes the title of the presentation, name, and date. &lt;br&gt;• Included a &quot;hook&quot; slide before the table of contents. (This slide could show a picture, a chart or a graph with data. If not, used a blank slide to ask a question, make a statement or tell a story.) &lt;br&gt;• Included a table of contents (also called a &quot;preview slide&quot; or &quot;agenda slide&quot;).</td>
<td>Used charts, graphs and/or pictures to show how variables are related in order to reduce bulleted text. &lt;br&gt;Reduced clutter on charts, graphs and/or pictures.</td>
<td>Used &quot;Message Titles&quot; (aka &quot;Sentence Titles or Headlines&quot;)&lt;br&gt;The body of each slide supported the claim made by the message title. &lt;br&gt;Translated acronym (in full) before using the acronym. &lt;br&gt;Used parallel structure. &lt;br&gt;Proofread work for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. &lt;br&gt;Did not use too many words on a slide. &lt;br&gt;Except for poetry, text was left-adjusted. &lt;br&gt;Used capitalization effectively.</td>
<td>Used readable color(s).&lt;br&gt;Did not use dark fonts on dark backgrounds, etc.&lt;br&gt;Designed visuals that can be seen from the back of the room:&lt;br&gt;Suggestions:&lt;br&gt;Title: Arial 28-36&lt;br&gt;Text: Arial 20-24&lt;br&gt;Labels: Arial 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body (6-8 slides)</td>
<td>• Included supporting slides in the body of the presentation. &lt;br&gt;Body (6-8 slides)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing (1-2 slides)</td>
<td>• Ended with a summary slide. &lt;br&gt;• If needed, created a reference slide(s) of sources. This slide is not usually shown unless a member of the audience requests additional information about a source.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Score</td>
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</table>

Score _________ x 2 = _________ / 80 points

Student’s Name

Title of Presentation

Date of Review

Oral Presentation (score)

Visuals (score)

Overall Grade   A+   A   A-   B+   B   B-   Does not meet course standards

Additional Comments:

Professor Hyatt’s Decision:

Exemption Granted       ___________  if the student did not register for the course during mini 1.

NO Exemption Granted     ___________  and the student will register for the course during mini 2, 3, or 4.