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15.280 Communication for Managers
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Persuasive Presentation with Q&A

Give a five-minute presentation on a business subject to a specific business audience, persuading that audience to take action. You may base the presentation on material in one of your other courses, on a paper or research project you have done, or on your own experience. Some examples are given below. (If you have any doubts about the appropriateness of your topic, discuss it with your professor before you develop the talk). You will have five minutes to present. Be ready to answer audience questions when you finish speaking. (You may take questions for up to two additional minutes).

At the time of your presentation, give your professor the following information, *in writing*:

- A detailed description of your situation (including the subject, the audience, the context, and your credibility), so that we can judge how well you have achieved your goals. Be sure to include what you want the audience to do by the time you have completed your talk.
- An outline of your presentation (on the same page with the description of your situation)
- Paper copies of all visual aids.

Also prepare to take about one minute to describe the audience and context orally to the others in your presentation lab before you begin your presentation. This description should be clearly separated from the beginning of your presentation.

Sample Topics

Here are some sample topics and situations to give you ideas:

You are the CFO of a corporation that manufactures hardware and software related to network connectivity. You have not had a good year, though the severity of the problems was not public until the fourth quarter. At the annual shareholders' meeting, the management team and your performance have been challenged by an active opposition. Justify your company's performance and the current management team against active opposition.

You are a senior staff member at an airline corporation. You have been asked to examine a set of insurance policies for the airlines, and to recommend one of them. Make and support your recommendation.

Due date To be scheduled in oral presentation labs not later than LEC 8

Grade weight 10%

Criteria for grading

Strategy: Was your strategy appropriate for your goals, the audience, and the context as you defined them? Did you achieve the persuasive goals you set out for this presentation?

Structure and development: Was your structure (direct/indirect) appropriate and easy to follow? Did you provide enough evidence to convince your audience of your main points? Did you use transitions effectively to move from point to point? Did your introduction effectively generate audience interest and provide a preview of the structure? Did your conclusion drive your point home and highlight next steps?

Delivery: Was your verbal delivery adequately varied in pitch and pace to maintain interest and free of distracting filler words? Did you sound enthusiastic and show interest in the audience's needs? Was your nonverbal delivery relatively confident, engaging, and effective? Did you use gestures in a way that was comfortable for you and not distracting to the audience? Did you move comfortably and effectively in the space available to you? Did you make eye contact with all members of the audience? Did you stay within the allotted time?

Visual aids: Did your visual aids enhance the presentation? Did they follow the principles of good design (e.g., were bullet points in a list conceptually and grammatically parallel)? Did you use visuals effectively (e.g., avoid blocking the audience's view of them, interact with them as appropriate)?

Q&A: Did you answer questions effectively?