

Chapter 18

In a Nutshell

Oral reports range from brief answers to questions at meetings, to hour-long speeches to large audiences.

Follow these guidelines:

- ▶ Plan your presentation. Determine your audience. Determine whether your slides will carry information to explain or will function as a helpful outline. Use a simple template that does not draw attention to itself. Choose an organizational pattern, such as narrative or problem-solution, as appropriate.
- ▶ Speak in a normal voice. Help yourself speak normally by not memorizing—practice enough so you can speak from notes.
- ▶ Arrange your speech in a narrative fashion. Use topic sentences to begin sections so that you are constantly telling the audience where they are in the sequence.
- ▶ Practice with any technology (laptops, computer slide presentations) before you give the speech.
- ▶ Be presentable. Dress appropriately; if you don't know what a professional should wear in this situation, ask someone who does. Avoid irritating mannerisms (smacking lips, shaking keys in pockets, saying “um” repeatedly).