



Master Your Virtual Presence: Communication Skills for the Teaching Librarian

Maria P. Truskey, MLIS
Research & Instructional Librarian



Trust

Engagement



Leadership

Reciprocity



Learning Pearls

- Describe what it means to demonstrate **presence** in front of an audience
- Apply science to stylistics within a virtual environment
- Employ cognitive reappraisal techniques to build for future success



What is Presence?

- Presence is simply how you show up for your audience.
- It portrays your intentions and level of authenticity to connect with them.
- A conscientious presence builds trusts with your listeners.
- “Knowledge can’t be pushed into a brain. It has to be pulled in.” (Anderson, 2016, p. 47)

1. Anderson, C. (2016). *TED Talks: The official TED guide to public speaking*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
2. Cohen, S. D. (2011, September). A view from the balcony: Step back and see how your audience is observing you. *Toastmaster*, 22–23. <https://www.stevendcohen.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/A-View-from-the-Balcony.pdf>
3. Gershman, S. (2019, December 13). Do you need charisma to be a great public speaker? *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2019/12/do-you-need-charisma-to-be-a-great-public-speaker>



What is Virtual Presence?

- In an online environment, presence or lack of presence still comes through the camera and microphone.
- It is easier to have a virtual presence if you have an inherent trust in the reciprocity of your audience.
- Your foremost intention to build an experience between yourself, your audience, and the message (i.e. content) transcends the common self-identity issues experienced by online presenters and educators.



Presence Activity

Discuss among groups of 4

1. Have you consciously developed a unique presence of your own?
2. Do you experience blocks in demonstrating presence when teaching online?
3. Is there one thing you would like to change or enhance to build your presence?



Integrating Science and Stylistics

Cognitive neuroscience focuses on brain activity *in response* to mental processes.
We can translate this evidence into useful advice for our everyday lives.

Translation #1: Let's reduce the overactive empathy response.

Translation #2: You're *excited*, you're *excited*, you're *excited*!

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2. Brooks, A.W. (2014). Get excited: Reappraising pre-performance anxiety as excitement. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 143(3), 1144–1158. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035325>



More Stylistics

- Virtual eye contact
- Let the audience check you out
- Vocal mechanics
 - Filler word anxiety
 - Pregnant pause
 - Word pace



Science & Stylistics Activity

Partner 1: Choosing one of the three prompts below, present to your partner for 30 seconds with a focus on open posture, eye contact, word pace, and lack of filler words.

Partner 2: Watch and listen to your partner in order to provide feedback.

Then switch roles!

Prompt #1: My favorite hobby is I love it because...

Prompt #2: I live in ... it's a great place because...

Prompt #3: My first name means ... and it fits me because...



Cognitive Reappraisal

- Focusing on “what went right” instead of “what went wrong” has true scientific benefits.
- Cognitive reappraisal is an emotion regulation strategy that produces neurobiological changes in the brain.
- Over time, the brain becomes less triggered and more resilient in reaction to the same circumstances of stress.

1. Bastiaansen, J. A., Bennis, E. C., Marsman, J. B. C., Ormel, J., Aleman, A., & Oldehinkel, A. J. (2018). Prefrontal cortex activation during a cognitive reappraisal task is associated with real-life negative affect reactivity. *PLOS ONE*, 13(8), e0202888. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0202888>
2. d'Arbeloff, T. C., Kim, M. J., Knodt, A. R., Radtke, S. R., Brigidi, B. D., & Hariri, A. R. (2018). Microstructural integrity of a pathway connecting the prefrontal cortex and amygdala moderates the association between cognitive reappraisal and negative emotions. *Emotion*, 18(6), 912–915. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000447>
3. Gallo, C. (2017). *The cognitive cure for stage fright, according to neuroscience*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carminegallos/2017/05/31/the-cognitive-cure-for-stage-fright-according-to-neuroscience/>
4. Ochsner, K. N., Bunge, S. A., Gross, J. J., & Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2002). Rethinking Feelings: An fMRI study of the cognitive regulation of emotion. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 14(8), 1215–1229. <https://doi.org/10.1162/089892902760807212>
5. Yeh, N., Barber, S. J., Suri, G., & Oritz, P. (2020). The role of reappraisal success in emotional and memory outcomes. *Emotion*, 20(6), 939–950. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000575>



Reappraisal Activity

Discuss with a partner how this scenario could be reappraised so that a similar future scenario might elicit a healthier reaction.

“It was nearing the end of class and a student asked a very complicated question. I couldn’t provide a direct answer but I attempted a response. I ended up going on a tangent that trailed to nowhere! I felt like everyone was looking at me as if I didn’t know what I was talking about. It was difficult to get my momentum back and I feel like I lost the audience. Then the class ended and I just felt so disappointed.”



Summary

- Holding effective presence in front of an audience
- Neuroscience + presentation stylistics + virtual venue
- Rewiring our brains for future success with reappraisal techniques



Outline

1. Welcome & Hook
2. WIIFT (what's-in-it-for-them)
3. Summary of purpose
4. Tell them what you're going to tell them
5. Tell them
6. Tell them what you told them
7. Ending hook/Closing



Q & A

Thank you!



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Maria P. Truskey, MLIS
Research & Instructional Librarian
Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library
maria.truskey@mdcourts.gov