

Tips to Make Your District Concurrent Session Come Alive for Your Audience

We look forward to meeting you at our upcoming Spring Meeting in Pittsburgh! Over the years, we have received lots of feedback about the concurrent sessions conducted by our Member districts. We have put together this tip sheet to provide you with ideas, generated by past participants, which will help you to develop an engaging and thoughtful presentation.

Energy: Your energy has an impact on your audience. If you appear bored or do not seem to know your own material, the audience will pick up on the cues and respond accordingly.

Visuals: If you are giving a PowerPoint presentation, make sure it is not too text heavy. If members have to spend lots of time reading, they cannot spend as much time listening to you. Use bullet points, and make the font large enough so that people in the back of the room can see it. Do not read the slides to the audience.

Brain Breaks: Brain research tells us that adults, like children, take in only so much information before they get distracted, bored, or zone out. The research says adults need brief breaks after approximately 10 minutes of talk. These breaks can be a part of your presentation. Invite the audience to share reactions or thoughts on what has been presented. Ask them to engage in table talk about the topic you are presenting or ask them to explore a particular related question. Have people turn and talk to the person(s) sitting nearest them about a specific issue. Intersperse short video clips of your work during the presentation.

Participation: Find ways for the audience to participate. Engage them in a live text-messaging poll about the topic. One option is <http://www.polleverywhere.com/>. (Experiment with these in advance, though. You don't want to try to figure these out on the spot. See Brain Breaks above for more ideas.)

Handouts: When possible, provide the audience with written materials that they can reference later. Members want to take back what they have learned to other decision makers and colleagues in their district. We also request your materials to upload to our meeting app and to post on our website so that members can access them during and after the meeting.

Questions: Allow members of the audience ample time to ask you questions. If you are not going to take questions throughout the presentation, let the audience know at the start that you have saved time at the end to answer questions.

Thank you for your submissions.
We look forward to learning more about the work in your district!