Tips for In-Person Roundtable Presentations

In-Person Roundtables: A roundtable presentation is 45 minutes in length with part oral presentation and discussion with a group of 10 people seated around a common table. Roundtable presentations typically are 30 minutes of presentation followed by 15 minutes of discussion and feedback. Roundtables are an ideal format for networking and in-depth discussion on a particular topic. Presenters are encouraged to present their latest research or project in an engaging and interactive way. If using a laptop to present, it must be operating on battery power since electrical outlets are not available. ACTFL will not provide laptops/computers. No additional audiovisual equipment is allowed for roundtable presentations. Roundtable presentations are presented in a designated space inside the exhibit hall, which does have WiFi.

Pre-talk Preparation
- Plan to get in the area a few minutes early to set up and test the equipment.
- Turn off your cell phone and ask others to do the same.

Handouts:
- Presenters are advised to always prepare at least 10 copies of syllabi, assignments, and other curricular tools for discussion. Be sure your name and e-mail address are on the handout.
- Distribute handouts at the beginning of your talk.

Opening:
- Jump right in and get to the point by stating the question you will seek to answer.
- Give your rehearsed opening statement; don't improvise at the last moment.
- Use the opening to catch the interest and attention of the group.
- Briefly state the problem or topic you will be discussing.
- Briefly summarize your main theme for an idea or solution.

Speaking:
- Your presentation is only 30 minutes followed by 15 minutes for group interaction.
- Speak clearly and distinctly.
- Pause briefly to give your group time to digest the information on each new slide.
- Don’t read the slides aloud. Your audience can read them far faster than you can talk.

PowerPoint Slides:
- You may show PowerPoint slides on your laptop at the table; however, the laptop must be battery powered and fully charged.
- Let the pictures or graphics in your PowerPoint slides tell the story – don’t overload with text and/or data. Too much text makes the slide unreadable.
- The aim is to have a few powerful PowerPoint slides.
- Prepare an Agenda or Table of Contents slide.
- Proofread everything, including visuals and numbers.
- Font size must be large enough to be easily read. Size 28 to 34 with a bold font is recommended.
- It is distracting if you use too wide a variety of fonts.
- Animation effects can be interesting when used in moderation.
- Be sure to credit any sources used in your PowerPoint slides.
Conclusion:
- Remind everyone to complete the survey for your roundtable presentation in the mobile app.
- Too much animation is distracting.
- Consider using animated clip art.
- Consider using custom animation.
- You can insert video and audio clips into PowerPoint, but they must be on your computer because you won’t have access to the Internet.

Discussion
- Leave 15 minutes for group discussion.
- Relax. If you’ve done the research, you can easily answer most questions.
- Some questions are too specific or personal. Politely refuse to answer.
- If you can’t answer a question, say so. Don’t apologize. “I don’t have that information. I’ll try to find out for you.”

Length:
- A roundtable presentation is 45 minutes in length with part oral presentation and discussion with a group of 10 people seated around a common table. Roundtable presentations typically are 30 minutes of presentation followed by 15 minutes of discussion and feedback.
- End on time!

Conclusion:
- End your talk with the summary statement or question you have prepared. What do you want them to do? What do you want them to remember?
- Remind everyone to complete the survey for your roundtable presentation in the mobile app.