

# 99-Second Presentation Guidelines

## What Is 99 Seconds?

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### Forum and Expo Overview

ISPI-Michigan's April Membership Meeting is designed to allowing local practitioners to share what they know with their greater Detroit colleagues. The evening is divided into two formats...

- A **Forum** of 99-second quick presentations that succinctly get across one idea or concept,
- Cracker barrel table presentations where professionals can share a project, a model, an emerging trend, etc. with those who are interested.
- There is also an Expo where practitioners can display their products or sell their services.

These guidelines explain how to conduct a 99-Second presentation.

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### Definition

99 Seconds is a special type of panel session that features a number of presenters (usually 10 or more). Each presenter makes a brisk, self-contained presentation that lasts for less than 99 seconds.

Although all presentations deal with the same general topic, no attempt is made to sequence them in any logical order or to standardize the presentation format. Our April 17th topic will be "**Using HPT to (you fill in the blank).**" Read the following directions to see how you would like to present your nugget or kernel of great information. Please contact Kathleen Groschner [forum@ispimi.org](mailto:forum@ispimi.org) for additional details.

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### Suggestions for Presenters

If you are interested in doing a 99 Seconds presentation...

- Choose a single concept, principle, or tip.
  - Choose a topic that you can explain to someone in a minute's time. A bit to spare.
  - Practice your presentation with a timer. It's difficult to estimate the passage of 99 seconds. It is a longer period of time than you think.
  - Don't memorize your presentation, but be sure you can recall the key ideas in correct sequence.
  - If you don't have time to use elaborate media, use your imagination to create memorable props.
  - If necessary, you may use a couple of PowerPoint slides. Make sure that each slide has fewer than 6 lines and each line has fewer than 6 words.
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### What Does the Audience Want?

Based on interviews of hundreds of audience members from previous 99-Seconds sessions, Sivasailam Thiagarajan (Thiagi) suggests you follow these five important guidelines...

- Balance learning with entertainment. Deliver powerful learning content, but don't bore people. Use attention-getting devices but avoid 99 seconds of fluff.
  - Keep your session self-contained. Make sure that participants receive immediate value in these 99 seconds. Don't use the session to sell your services, products, or publications. Don't even mention them.
  - Be realistic about what you can present within 99 seconds. Rehearse your session so you can deliver it in 90 seconds without talking fast and running out of breath.
  - Think auditory. Think in terms of story telling and radio.
  - Use interaction, but don't waste time with elaborate instructions.
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### Types of 99-Second Presentation

There are many different types of 99-Seconds sessions. For our April 17th session, we have grouped the different formats into Thiagi's four categories, each explained on the following pages. Read through each type and choose which one best fits what you would like to share with your professional colleagues.

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# 99-Second Presentation Guidelines

## Active Presentation or Brief Presentation

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### Type 1:

This type of 99-Seconds sessions involves interactive strategies...

#### Active Participation

- **Creative visualization...** Facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and takes them through a guided visualization exercise to encourage creative problem solving or empathic understanding. *Example: Everyday life in a refugee camp.*
  - **Introspection...** Facilitator asks a series of questions that provoke participants to arrive at some truthful insights. *Example: How would your career be affected if your sexual orientation were different?*
  - **Physical activity...** Performer demonstrates a physical activity, inviting audience members to follow along. *Example: How to relax by using yogic breathing techniques.*
  - **Jolt...** A brief experiential activity that provides a powerful epiphany. *Example: An exercise in which two participants arm wrestle, ignoring the rules that actually support a cooperative approach ("Your score depends on how many times your hand touches the table.")*
  - **Questions and answers...** Prior to the session, presenter distributes questions to confederates in the audience. During the presentation s/he "invites" questions from the audience and responds to them. *Example: Legal aspects of sexual harassment.*
  - **Sing-along...** Presenter invites audience members to sing along with her/him, using a well-known tune and words from a handout.
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### Type 2:

This type involves effective presentation techniques that are usually incorporated as parts of lengthier presentations...

#### Brief Presentation

- **Analogy...** Presenter suggests an analogy (by holding up a prop or displaying a graphic) and describes how it is similar to a real-world object or process. *Example: Bullying as an analogy to sexual harassment.*
  - **Cartoon...** Presenter displays a cartoon (or a comic strip) on screen and explains a powerful principle illustrated by it. *Example: Dilbert illustrating the uselessness of consultants.*
  - **Formula...** Presenter displays a formula and quickly explains the variables and functions. *Example: How to compute your daily rate for consulting services.*
  - **Joke...** Presenter tells a joke with a punch line that reveals an important truth. *Example: A small child exclaiming that the emperor has no clothes.*
  - **Magic trick...** Performer does a conjuring act and uses it as an analogy for an important principle. *Example: Linking Rings magic trick to illustrate the power of belief.*
  - **Pithy saying...** Presenter displays an aphorism or a proverb and explains its application to the topic. *Example: Discussion of the impact of the German proverb on teambuilding strategies: Durch zusammenleben, lernt man zusammenleben. (By living together, people learn to live together.)*
  - **Poetry reading...** Presenter recites a poem that highlights critical principles. *Example: A ballad about office romances to illustrate performance problems.*
  - **Rap song...** Presenter performs a rap song that highlights important principles. *Example: New-hire orientation.*
  - **Story telling...** Presenter tells a personal anecdote or a short-short story that highlights an important principle. *Example: Frederic Brown's Sentinel in which the admirable soldier-hero turns out to be an alien invading Earth!*
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# 99-Second Presentation Guidelines

## Mediated Presentation or Co-Presentation

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### Type 3:

#### Mediated Presentation

You can incorporate different types of media productions in a 99-Seconds presentation. An important precaution is to test out the equipment ahead of time and to have a back up...

- **Audio recording...** Presenter plays an audio recording in the form of a new item to highlight key principles. *Example: "Scientists report a simple technique to prevent repetitive stress injuries in the workplace."*
  - **Conversation with alter ego...** Performer plays dual roles by having a conversation with her "evil twin sister" presented through an audio or video tape recording. (This recording is produced ahead of time with suitable pauses to permit a simulated conversation.) *Example: A debate about the advantages and disadvantages of teamwork.*
  - **Movie excerpt...** Presenter uses an excerpt from some popular movie to highlight an important principle. *Example: A 1-minute excerpt from the movie Gettysburg to show visionary leadership in action.*
  - **Music...** Presenter performs or plays the recording of a piece of music and quickly highlights the critical message. *Example: John Lennon's Imagine followed by an exhortation for performance technologists to work on world peace.*
  - **Puppets...** Performer conducts a conversation with a puppet to highlight important principles. *Example: Importance of environmental protection.*
  - **Puzzle...** Presenter displays a puzzle on screen and asks participants to solve it to identify a critical principle. The puzzle is gradually solved to speed up the process. *Example: A "Wheel of Fortune" puzzle with a statement about rewards and reinforcement.*
  - **Silent slide set...** Presenter displays a set of slides (in an animated form) that explains a process. *Example: Five steps in rapid instructional design.*
  - **Video recording...** Presenter plays a videotape recording to highlight some important points. *Example: Videotape recording of a typical office room to identify different safety hazards.*
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### Type 4:

#### Co-Presentation

More than one person can present a 99-Seconds session. The key element in this approach is for the co-presenters to rehearse the presentation and to time it tightly...

- **Conversation...** Two presenters discuss a common paradoxical topic, highlighting the pros and cons of the extremes. Audience members realize that the paradox has to be managed effectively to reduce the disadvantages and to utilize the advantages. *Example: "Individuals cannot produce significant results." versus "Teamwork results in wasted effort."*
  - **Drama...** A small group of people (in suitable costume, if possible) act out a skit that highlights key elements of an effective procedure, usually by presenting a before-and-after segments. *Example: How to conduct a rapid performance analysis.*
  - **Gibberish...** In this improv-theater technique an alien or a guru is interviewed by an expert. The alien talks in gibberish and the expert translates what she says. *Example: What a Klingon has observed about human behavior during staff meetings.*
  - **Interview...** Presenter interviews one or two experts to highlight important strategies for achieving a goal. *Example: How to handle cross-cultural clashes.*
  - **One word at a time...** In this improv technique, three or more participants respond to questions from audience members or present an important message, taking turns to speak one word at a time. *Example: The importance of equal participation.*
  - **Panel...** Three or more presenters quickly present a series of strategies for achieving an objective. *Example: How to motivate the online learner.*
  - **Role play...** Two presenters (or the presenter and a "volunteer" from the audience) conduct a role-play that illustrates some important interpersonal skill. *Example: How to present bad news to the client.*
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# 99-Second Presentation Guidelines

## Benefits and Limitations

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### Benefits

Here are some advantages of the 99-Seconds strategy...

- **Efficiency...** The tight time limit forces presenters to focus on the key learning points and to avoid dwelling on trivial “nice-to-know” points.
  - **Interest...** The unusual format and rapid change of presenters maintains high levels of audience interest, especially with the new generation of learners brought on MTV programs.
  - **Variety...** Presenters talk about different points using different formats. This variety enables audience members to receive a well-rounded picture of what is happening.
  - **Participation...** Audience members have to actively organize different presentations into a coherent whole that makes sense to them. After the session, they may have to do some research to close any gaps. These responsibilities give additional ownership to the listeners.
  - **Assessment...** The 99-second format can be used as a performance test for presentation skills.
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### Limitations

The 99-seconds format also has some disadvantages...

- **Confusion...** Because the individual presentations are not synchronized with each other, audience members may find the ideas to be disconnected.
  - **Contradictions...** Another consequence of the individualized approach could be that later presenters contradict the ideas and opinions presented by earlier presenters.
  - **Incompleteness...** Because of the time limit, it is possible that presenters may ignore some critical elements of the overall topic.
  - **Passivity...** Also because of the time limit, presenters may not provide practice opportunities or feedback.
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