

## OUR COURTS ARIZONA

### **Lessons Learned from Dry Run Test Presentations**

1. Unless the group requests a particular presentation, chose one that you are comfortable with and that best fits the audience (based on education, background, and knowledge levels) and the time frame and setting.
2. Practice the presentation to gauge how much time it realistically takes to do, taking into account time for interactive questions and comments from the audience. Tailor the presentation as needed to fit the time allocated to you. Set interim time markers for your presentation and try to adhere to those timeframes.
3. If you are not using your own equipment, but rather that of the sponsoring organization or the facility where the presentation will be done, check in advance on the computer, projector, screen, and remote controller to be used for the Power Point slides. Be sure all necessary and compatible equipment, including cables, are available and functioning properly. Bring your presentation on a thumb drive and consider how to present the material without the Power Point in the event of technical difficulties (e.g., consider having a poster board and marker available if you have a necessary visual component of your hypothetical).
4. State clearly and succinctly at the start and end of your presentation what the primary purpose of "Our Courts Arizona" is (see "Faculty Notes - Program Purpose"), and the main point or theme of the particular presentation you are doing.
5. Stated differently, clearly identify the "take-away" lessons we want the audience to learn from the presentation, and incorporate those messages clearly in the presentation itself. For example, if presenting the program on the Bill of Rights and the "Scarlet Plate" hypothetical, do not merely describe what the Bill of Rights includes. Rather, also clearly communicate that the Bill of Rights is intended to protect people from the government, and the courts must provide that protection. The courts must act in a manner unlike

politicians - free from outside influences, public opinion, popular opinion, or governmental pressure. Courts must recognize and uphold individual rights and liberties without feeling beholden to political forces or special interests. Thus, all citizens, not just judges and lawyers, have a vital stake in ensuring that Arizona has fair, impartial, and accessible courts.

6. Most presentations include early audience participation. Soon after you begin, gauge your audience to anticipate their level of participation and consider how the presentation might need to be refocused as a result. (For example, you may need to cut or go more quickly through parts of the Power Point if you get a high level of participation from the audience.)
7. A participatory presentation is desirable, but you may encounter an audience that is reluctant or unwilling to engage. If you have a small or tepid audience, consider asking what is most important to them and relevant to the topic. You could start by saying something like, "I want to make sure we talk about your most important issues today. You've seen the subject of the presentation. Is there anything you want to make sure we cover?" You can adjust your presentation accordingly.
8. Generally, audiences engage more when asked questions that get them thinking. Do not hesitate to challenge your audience, but in a gracious, friendly tone. Audiences pay attention when they are directly involved.
9. Leave time for questions and answers. An important feature of Our Courts Arizona is its interactive format, attempting to directly engage the audience rather than lecturing. So if time is running short on completing the Power Point or finishing all aspects of your script, do not worry. Just loop back to your primary "take-away" point(s) as you wrap up, emphasizing the importance of fair, impartial, and accessible courts.
10. Be brief, finish early.
11. Follow up with a thank you letter to the sponsoring organization.