

MKTG 3600

SPOTLIGHTING ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVE

The assignment will require students to prepare information and then respond concisely & convincingly to questions related to that information, thus, the assignment will help the students hone their oral communication skills and become more adept at thinking on their feet. Thus, this assignment mimics what is required of an effective salesperson.

THE TASKS (20 points total)

Each student will sign-up to participate in Spotlighting once during the semester. Students will select the dates (and thus topics) for their own participation. A sign-up sheet will start to circulate on the 1st day of class – please write down your date and your assigned reading when signing up for Spotlighting

The Spotlighting process has two components, a preparation component, and a participation component.

1. Preparation Component: (5 points)

Each student should review the “Keys to Success” page of this assignment description and consider which “Quality of Presentation” elements they wish to work on (there are 10 listed). Each student must identify three elements they wish to work on and identify their strategy for performing well on these elements. Students should identify one element they consider to be a natural strength, one that they consider a natural weakness, and one other element (“Wildcard”) that they think it would be good to work on. To accomplish this part of the assignment students must complete the left half of the “Spotlighting Evaluation Form” and bring it with them to their Spotlighting Participation Day (the one you have signed up for). Below is an example of this.

Wildcard Element:	Posture
Background: I have a bad habit of using to casual of a posture and thus I come across as uncaring about the topic I am speaking of.	
Plan for Spotlighting: I will take a posture that is more upright and I will try to stay on the balls of my feet so I look excited about what I am presenting.	

Important Note: Besides the completion on this form and the thought and preparation concerning the speaking elements, students should fully prepare the material for their participation day. The quickest way to create a Spotlighting disaster is to not know the material from the assigned readings.

2. Participation Component (15 Points)

Each student will sign-up for one of the reading topics, and on that day will participate in the public speaking part of Spotlighting. Participation consists of the steps listed below:

- (1) Student receives question
- (2) The student has 15 seconds to formulate his/her response (use it!)

- (3) The student responds. 60 second minimum, 2:00 maximum
At 60 seconds the student will get a “green light”
At 1:30 the student gets a “yellow light” (go to conclusion!)
At 1:50 the student gets a “red light” (finish immediately!)
At 2:00 the student gets “clapped down” (you’re done!)

Students will be graded on both their content (25%) and public speaking performance (75%) as both components are important. The “Spotlighting Evaluation Form” will be used to score each student and these will be returned to all students at once when the assignment has concluded as a whole. This evaluation form is page four of this document.

PREPARATION & LOGISTICS:

Strong preparation of the relevant material will be required for students to perform well on this assignment. Past experience has shown that students who prepare at the level equivalent to quiz preparation perform best on the content (and often presentation) component of the assignment. I will choose in what order the students participate, thus you should avoid trying to guess which part of the reading you will be responding to.

After the completion of Spotlighting there will often be a discussion of what certain students did well, and what they need to work on. This frank discussion is designed to allow all students to participate in the learning process. Please be aware of this and do not take personal insult if I point out areas in which you need improvement.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Preparation Component: (5 points)

I will look over your form to be sure you put sufficient thought into it, and I will evaluate whether I witness you attempting to execute your plan for each of the three elements. Note: This section **MUST** use the form from this assignment description. I would prefer it to be typed. If you do not hand me the form while I hand you the question you will lose all 20 points for the assignment. I need this form to grade your performance!

Participation Component: (15 Points)

I will be judging you based on the categories listed on the evaluation form (see last page of this assignment description). Students should review that grading form and the material on the next page as the categories listed represent the behaviors associated with effective public speakers and those who score well on Spotlighting.

The Keys to Successful Spotlighting and the Assignment Grading Criteria

Quality of the Answer	
Showed Preparation	Based on the quality of the answer, was it evident that the speaker had properly prepared the article and its content?
Relevance to Question Asked	Was the answer a direct and worthwhile answer to the specific question asked, or was it simply a brain dump of information the speaker knew.
Organization of Answer	Did the answer have a clear introduction, a sufficiently full body, and a summarizing conclusion? Use the Model: tell them what you are going to say, say it, tell them what you said.
Clarity	Was the point being made clearly expressed and was it appropriately illustrated with examples. I encourage the use of examples as long as they are brief and to the point.

Quality of the Presentation		
Audience Engagement	Does the speaker use their body language and eye contact to draw the audience into the presentation?	EYE CONTACT: make it direct and move it around. Avoid breaking eye contact by looking at question card, floor, ceiling, etc.
		FACIAL EXPRESSIONS: use these to reinforce the points you are making and try not to look like you are terrified – even if you are!
Voice Issues	Your voice is your first speaking tool. So, are you using your voice to invite the audience to listen to you? Are you using it to make your points more appropriately? The key here is to use variety across all of the voice options.	VOLUME: be sure to speak loud enough to overcome distractions and to allow all audience members to hear you, however, avoid yelling (unless it is done for dramatic effect). Variance in volume is a great way to make a point.
		PACE: Avoid speaking too fast, but most importantly, vary your pace. A single pace becomes difficult to pay attention to. Use slow downs or pauses to make points and also speed up when appropriate.
		QUALITY/TONE: again, match the voice quality with the point you are making and avoid a monotone approach. Let energy come through in your voice without sounding nervous.
Body Issues	Your body is your second speaking tool; use it to release your energy in a positive way, make stronger points, and to avoid audience fatigue.	GESTURES: Avoid nervous gestures that are distracting. Instead, incorporate purposeful gestures to reinforce your points.
		POSTURE: Try to have a posture that tells the audience that you are excited about sharing your story. Lean towards the audience a bit and avoid a bored or overly rigid posture.
		MOVEMENT: There is no need to stand still – move a bit to keep the audience on their toes and to improve your audience engagement. Avoid a “caged animal” pacing, instead be unpredictable.
Filler Words	Speakers fill transitions and mental pauses with unnecessary filler words. In addition, they use meaningless phrases that distract from the point being made.	FILLER WORDS: Ums, ahs, ers, etc. have no place in a good presentation. Be especially wary of these at transitions. Practice just being quiet until you have fully formed your next thought.
		DUMB WORDS OR PHRASES: You know, to tell you the truth, like, and other such phrases/words offer no value and should be avoided. Practice being more direct and purposeful in your choice of words.

Spotlighting Evaluation Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

Students should complete this side only

Natural Strength Element:
Background:
Plan for Spotlighting:

Natural Weakness Element:
Background:
Plan for Spotlighting:

Wildcard Element:
Background:
Plan for Spotlighting:

Students:
DO NOT write in this box

CONTENT

Prepared: 1 2 3 4 5
Organized 1 2 3 4 5
"On Target" 1 2 3 4 5

ENGAGEMENT

Eye Contact 1 2 3 4 5
Facial Exp. 1 2 3 4 5

VOICE ISSUES

Volume 1 2 3 4 5
Pace 1 2 3 4 5
Tone/Quality 1 2 3 4 5

BODY ISSUES

Gestures 1 2 3 4 5
Posture: 1 2 3 4 5
Movement: 1 2 3 4 5

FILLER WORDS:

Ums/ers/ahs
"You know"

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Final Grade: _____