

**7. Questions and challenges:** During the oral presentations some questions may take place, here you have and useful link about how to overcome them and how to react with good answers.

➤ Link: <http://web.cba.neu.edu/~ewertheim/skills/oral.htm#visual>

## USE OF QUESTIONS

- ask "friendly" questions - don't use questions to embarrass or badger; avoid known "sore spots"
  - avoid asking risky questions - that is, questions that may imply lack of knowledge or intelligence
  - make the interchange a mutually satisfying experience; give respondents time to think and phrase their answer; help people save face by summarizing what they have said so far and asking if anyone else has something to add
  - don't let respondent wander or attempt to take control of the presentation; a polite "thank you, that's what I was looking for" can get you back on track
  - if extensive audience discussion is desired, avoid isolated one-on-one dialogues with specific individuals
  - when challenged, be candid and firm but avoid over responding
  - maintain control of the session
  - be firm and assertive without being aggressive or defensive
  - don't let interruptions disrupt your composure
  - avoid circumstances that require an apology
  - anticipate questions and prepare responses; rehearse answers to difficult questions
  - if necessary, offer to obtain additional information and follow up
  - use questions to strengthen your main arguments-answer questions candidly but positively link objections to attractive features
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- ✓ avoid rhetorical questions - ask interesting questions that are thought provoking but not too difficult to answer
  - ✓ ask some open ended question with no right or wrong answers - encourage sharing experiences, feelings, opinions
  - ✓ put "you" elements into questions - make them relevant to the audience's personal experience
  - ✓ prepare key questions prior to the presentation; it is difficult to think of good questions on your feet

### Guideline for Answering Questions

- Anticipate Questions: think of the ten most likely questions and plan out your answer
- Understand the Question: paraphrase it if necessary; repeat it if needed
- Plan the Answer: particularly if you anticipated the question
- Do Not Digress
- Be Honest: if you can't answer the question, say so
- Reinterpret Loaded Questions: if attacked try to show the similarity to other situations

- Control Interchanges: if a questioner becomes a heckler try to enlist the audience; if a questioner digresses, try to remind the audience of the goal of the presentation
- Use the Last Question to Summarize