

7.1b

An introduction to presentations

- C** Read these alternative openings for a presentation on renting office space. Notice that the content of the two openings is basically the same.

Opening 1

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I'd like to thank you for inviting me here to speak to you today, and I hope that after that excellent coffee no one will fall asleep during my presentation! Well, let me introduce myself – my name is Carlos Pinto and I am the Sales Director of Centre-Space Properties.

My objective here today is to help you to find the right office for your business. During my talk I'll be looking at four areas. (*looks briefly at notes*) I'll begin by introducing our company, then I'll show you some slides of office space that we have available in this city. After that I'll move on to describe our optional service package, which includes security and secretarial services. Finally, I'll deal with the question of price. My presentation will take around 20 minutes, and if you have any questions I'll be pleased to answer them at the end.

OK. (*shows slide with an organigram of the company*) Let's start by looking at who we are and how the company has developed over the last 10 years.

Opening 2

I bet you're sick of looking for office space, right? Are you feeling like this? (*shows slide of a confused businessman in a small room with a big question mark over his head*) Who feels like that? (*looks around room, everyone laughs*) Wouldn't you prefer to feel like this? (*shows slide of a relaxed executive in a large office with plants and a line of clients in the background*)

You all know the importance of location for business success. Well, we can help you. (*shows transparency with a few words in large print*) My company is called Centre-Space Properties. Our success over 10 years has been built on a simple philosophy. We offer our clients: (*pointing to words on slide*) choice; an optional service package for your complete business needs; and the right price.

Right, I'd like to begin with a question: do you know which area in this city has the highest rent costs per square metre? (*looks round, waiting for answer*)

Discuss:

- 1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of opening 1?
- 2 What are the advantages and disadvantages of opening 2?
- 3 Can you think of situations where each would be appropriate?

- D** Discuss these points:

- 1 What is the problem with reading a presentation word for word? What alternatives are there?
- 2 How can you 'break the ice' at the beginning of a presentation?
- 3 What techniques can the presenter use to relax if he/she starts to feel nervous?
- 4 Is it a good idea to tell the audience at the beginning what you will talk about and for how long?
- 5 Is it a good idea to summarize the main points again at the end?
- 6 Some people prefer to answer questions during their presentation, others at the end. What are the advantages and disadvantages of both methods?
- 7 What kind of audio-visual aids do you use in your presentations?
- 8 Can you give any other advice on how to give a successful presentation?