

Body language and gestures for presentations

Choose one of the things below and try to illustrate it just with a gesture. Can your partner think of a phrase connected to presentations which means the same thing?

Gestures that can be used by the presenter

- “Can I have your attention please?”
- “Hi” (Greeting people as they come in or acknowledging someone who arrives late)
- “Over here please” (Showing people where to sit)
- “I (am...)” (Introducing yourself)
- “Silly me” (e.g. when the presenter makes a mistake)/ “Oh my goodness (not again!)” (For example when the equipment goes wrong)
- “Sorry the equipment is so slow!”
- “First”/ “Firstly”/ “First of all”
- “Second”/ “Secondly”
- “Please take a handout and pass the rest along”
- “Over here (somewhere)”/ “In this area”/ “In this part of the slide”
- “...REALLY/ VERY...” (Emphasizing)
- “Right!...” (Very clearly showing a transition between stages, like a more emphatic “So” or “Okay”)
- “Please remember...”
- “Please raise your hand (if you have a question)”
- “Yes. The gentleman/ lady at the back.” (Used by the presenter to indicate whose question they will hear next)
- “I’m trying to see...”/ “I can’t see... very well” (for example if someone very far away is asking a question)
- “That’s a difficult question”/ “Let me think”
- “I doubt whether that will work/ whether that is true”
- “I hope so”
- “It’s a secret/ Mind your own business” (Usually used in a joking way!)
- “So so”/ “More or less”
- “Any more questions (anyone)?”
- “I’ll now hand over to my colleague”
- “Thank you so much for...”

Gestures that can be used by someone organizing or helping with the presentation

- “Please continue” (used by someone at the back of the room to show the presenter that they should continue speaking, perhaps to fill time until the next person arrives)
- “Time is running out”
- “Time out” (Used by someone hosting the presentation to the presenter to show that they should take a break)
- “Stop speaking”/ “Time’s up” (Used by someone hosting the presentation to show the presenter they should wrap the presentation up)

What could the possible gestures be to show those things? What other phrases could be used with those gestures?