



The Dementia Engagement
and Empowerment Project

DEEP guide for conference presenters and speakers

People with dementia are increasingly taking part in conferences and events - as presenters and as audience members. This guide shares some good practice ideas about how to best ensure people with dementia feel welcomed and included. The guide is based on recommendations from people with dementia.

Setting the scene and welcoming people with dementia

The chair of the conference should welcome people with dementia publicly to the conference and remind presenters and delegates to take shared responsibility for ensuring people feel included throughout the day.

Try and create a sense of mutual sensitivity, a friendliness between delegates and an openness that allows debate, discussion and challenge in a respectful way.

Use of language and choice of words

Give some thought to the language that you use to describe 'dementia' or talk about people with dementia:

- Do not use words which objectify or depersonalise - e.g. dementia sufferer, demented or old fashioned terminology such a 'senile dementia'
- Use alternative phrases such as 'living with dementia', 'person with dementia'
- Straightforward and clear terminology to describe your ideas is helpful, and doesn't have to be patronising.
- Some of the ideas or information you wish to share in your presentation may be upsetting to people with dementia. This doesn't mean you shouldn't include it -

however, think about giving a 'health warning' beforehand. Examples may include discussion of illness progression, long term care, impact on carers.

- Avoid the use of acronyms or 'professional speak' - if you must use them, make sure you clearly explain what they stand for

Powerpoint presentations

Powerpoint slides can really help people with dementia to concentrate on the presentation.

Don't fill your slides with lots of words - words and pictures together can help to communicate an idea.

Leave plenty of white space on each slide.

Limit the number of slides that you use.

Avoid using slide animation - words and pictures 'flying in' can be very distracting

Don't rush the presentation of your information so that people have time to process what is being said.

The choice of images used to represent people with dementia are often fairly negative (if chosen from stock photography). Think carefully about images that best convey your messages.

Taking questions from the floor

Think about how you invite questions from the floor. People with dementia can find it more helpful to ask questions as they arise during your presentation.

If this is not ideal, make sure there are post it notes and pens on tables so that people can write down their question as they think of it.

You may want to invite people with dementia only to ask questions during your presentation - and suggest that everyone else can wait until the end. Or you could build in question time at set intervals during your presentation.