Checklist: The Setting

Knowing as much as you can about the physical space you will be presenting in is great information to have as you prepare your presentation. It may not always be possible to visit the venue in person well before you present but going there virtually or asking organizers about the space in which you will present is always time well invested. This checklist will make sure you ask the right questions.

Arrive Early to Get the Lay of the Land

Ask yourself two questions:
- ☑ **How much control do you have over the environment?**
- ☑ **What will enable you to present successfully in this space?**

The Venue

- ☑ **Type of Room**
  1. Auditorium
  2. Conference room
  3. Classroom
  4. Outdoor setting
  5. Flat vs. raised podium or dias
  6. Awkward shapes (L-shaped or columns)

- ☑ **Size of Space**
  1. Too small (crowded, stuffy, people standing)
  2. Too large (droughty, echo, hard to be heard)
  3. Just right
  4. Distance from audience (What can they see?)

- ☑ **What's In the Room?**
  1. Stage or no stage
  2. Table or podium
  3. Seating arrangement
  4. Lighting (Can you control it?)
  5. Equipment (projector, audio connection, mic, clicker)

The Context

- ☑ **Type of Event**
  1. Conference: Single speaker or multiple speakers? Who's presenting ahead of you? What's their reputation? Listen to them if you can.

- ☑ **Internal Meeting**
  1. How many present?
  2. How large is the room?

- ☑ **Guest Lecturer/Hosted Event**
  1. Will you be introduced? (Provide them a script)
  2. Q&A moderator? (Someone to pass a mic?)

- ☑ **Timing**
  1. Morning (Best slot)
  2. Before lunch (Don't go overtime)
  3. After lunch (Toughest slot - be entertaining)
  4. Last speaker of the day (Don't go overtime)

- ☑ **Formal or Informal**
  1. If informal, dress business casual
  2. Err on the side of being overdressed