

Food Demonstration Tips for a Blue Ribbon Talk

Have a Neat Table

- Use a table cloth and apron that matches the theme of the demonstration.
- Cover the table before your demonstration. A small cloth cover could be laid over the plastic table cover. To aid in clean up, a clear piece of plastic could be placed over the work area.
- Have a wet cloth and dry towel to wipe hand on. Never wipe hands with the apron or table cover.



Use Appropriate Equipment:

- Use clear bowls and liquid measuring cups so the audience can see what you're doing.
- Use equipment suitable for the age of the demonstrator. (not sharp knives for a young member)
- Use a cutting board or mat and cut away from yourself. Even better, have food pre-cut.
- Wooden spoons are good choices for mixing and stirring, they are less noisy.
- Use a rubber spatula to remove all of the food from a container.
- Have pot holders for hot dishes.
- Use a small plate to hold soiled utensils instead of laying them on the tablecloth or balancing in a bowl.
- Take extra equipment and ingredients in case something gets broken or misplaced.
- Use equipment that is clean and in good repair.
- Suggest other equipment if the audience may not have what you're using (could chop with knife instead of using food processor).

Use Appropriate Methods:

- Wash hands before you begin. Use clean equipment and have a clean table cover.
- Use correct measuring techniques (types of measuring cups, level with straight edge, measure over waxed paper, etc.)
- Have most ingredients premeasured in ready in small clear bowls. Plan to measure 1 or 2 ingredients as part of the demonstration.
- If using electrical appliances, have cords running away from the demonstration table. Tape to the floor with duct tape if you will need to step over them.
- Place a damp cloth or towel under bowls and cutting boards to keep them from slipping and muffle sounds.
- Set up trays for each step of your recipe. Remove each tray as you're finished with it and bring the next one to the front table. A table behind you can hold extra trays and equipment. Keep the table clean and uncluttered. Arrange trays with the tallest containers near you or the back (from the audience) side of the tray.
- Place equipment and supplies on trays as needed. Work from left to right with unused containers on one side and empty ones on the other.
- Clear away used equipment before bringing another tray to the table.

- Do not use your fingers for handling food. Use a spoon, fork, spatula or tongs to transfer food. Or wear plastic gloves.
- Crack eggs with a knife into a custard cup before adding to the rest of the ingredients.
- Loosen or remove lids before starting.
- Clean batter from a spoon or beater with taps on your hand or rubber scraper, not the edge of the bowl. Don't wipe it with your finger.
- Cover brand names with tape or a paper label. Write the name of the ingredient on the label.
- Grease pans ahead of time; use a pastry brush or spray, not your fingers.
- Keep the work area in front of your table clear so the audience can see what you're doing.
- Have a small bag for trash taped to the table or nearby on the floor.
- Present your finished product in an attractive manner. (placemat, table ware, décor)

Your Presentation:

- Set up your table carefully; check your supplies and posters before you begin. Take a deep breath, smile and start.
- Talk naturally to the audience, look at them occasionally and smile.
- Don't 'introduce' each step. (Don't say "now I am going to...") Avoid using personal pronouns such as "my flour".
- If something goes wrong – stay calm and keep going. Explain what went wrong and how it was supposed to go if it is obvious that a mistake happened.
- Use correct cooking terms (beat, fold, etc) and make sure you know what they mean and are using them correctly.
- Give number of servings, costs, and nutrition information for recipes.
- Give suggestions for serving and storing the food.
- Suggest other ways of preparing the dish if appropriate; also, suggest additional foods to complete the meal.
- Give safety tips for using equipment and appliances.
- Suggest substitutions for ingredients if it may be a hard to find ingredient.
- Add freezing and storing information if appropriate.
- If an overhead mirror or demonstration is available, practice using it.
- Make sure everyone can see. Bring small groups in close. For a large group, possibly use a video camera and monitor or have pictures on a PowerPoint projector.
- Involve your audience if appropriate. Have someone help with passing out handouts or keeping time of procedures.
- Practice, then practice some more. Try videotaping your presentation to see how you look to others.
- Use brief note cards if needed. Set on trays or table.
- If using posters, have 4 – 5 posters. A title poster, 2-3 posters with the main points of the demonstration, including recipe ingredients or information, and a conclusion poster that reviews the main points.



Your Appearance:

- Look professional, neat and clean.
- Clothing should be appropriate for the demonstration. You could coordinate your outfit with the theme of the demonstration. Avoid long, flowing sleeves, large jewelry.
- Wear a clean, pressed apron. Use plastic gloves if you will be handling food that won't be cooked later.
- Hair should be clean, neat and tied back or covered.
- Nails should be clean.
- Small cuts or abrasions should be covered with a band aid.
- Never place hands near your face or hair.
- If you must sneeze or cough, replace contaminated food or equipment, wipe your hands on cloth, excuse yourself and proceed.
- Speak clearly and slowly with good grammar. Avoid nervous habits.



Don't Forget:

- Potholders
- Timer
- Spoons, knives
- Cutting board
- Serving equipment
- Appliance cords
- Sampling utensils, plates, napkins
- Paper towels

4-H Score Card for Demonstrations:

10% Introduction

Interesting, short, gain attention

10% Appearance

Dress suitable for work being done

Well groomed, good posture

30% Presentation

Voice natural, words distinct

Poised, friendly, confident

Time and material well used

Originality shown

Convincing, interest held

Well organized, words well chosen

Skillful workmanship,

Work and talk coordinated

Plain view of audience

Table neat and orderly

30% Subject Matter

Important points emphasized

Information accurate, up-to-date

Information usable by others

Worthwhile and practical

Suitable to age and ability level

10% Visuals and/or Equipment

Suitable for work being done

Charts, posters easily read

10% Summary

Important points stressed

Finished product displayed

Questions answered satisfactorily

Closing definite, table left neat



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