

PRESENTATIONS: ORGANIZATION, SLIDE CREATION, AND SPEAKING TIPS

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PRESENTATION: WHY?

- You are presenting in order to communicate to as broad an audience as possible the work that you have done.
- Your goal is for the entire audience to understand your work so that they can build on your work and can ask insightful questions thereby providing you with new ideas and novel ways to expand your work.

PRESENTATION: IN SEARCH OF PERFECTION

- **Organization of your talk**
- **Slide creation**
- **Speaking tips**

PRESENTATION: ORGANIZATION

Flow: 3 Keys to An Effective Presentation

- 1. Tell people what you are going to tell them. (This is an introductory slide that has on it the major areas you are going to cover.)**
- 2. Then tell them. (Make your points – support them with appropriate data/illustration/etc. This should mirror the major areas presented in #1)**
- 3. Tell them what you told them. (One or two conclusion slides key points for each of the major areas in #1.)**

PRESENTATION: ORGANIZATION

Timing:

- Stick to your ALLOTED time!
- You can comfortably show no more than 1.5 slides/minute. (A ten minute talk should have only 15 total slides – that includes your introductory slide too!)
- NEVER, EVER GO LONG! (Your talk can not exceed the allotted time. Plan to finish 20 seconds EARLY!) (No matter what you have to say, it is NOT so important that it gives you the right to throw the conference off schedule!)

PRESENTATION: SLIDE CREATION

Keep it SIMPLE:

- 1. If they can't read it, you didn't show it! Minimum font size for titles is 36 and minimum for text is 24. (Use 20 font for references if really pressed for space.)**
- 2. Limit to 8 lines per slide unless you are going to “stack” each point – (i.e. only the first point shows on the slide and then on the next click, it fades and the next point appears.)**

PRESENTATION: SLIDE CREATION

Keep it PLAIN:

- 1. Develop your own distinctive template and stick with it. If your University has a recommended standard template, then use it.**
- 2. Beware excessive animation. You can not hide a poor talk or inadequate data by making it change color, fly, or twinkle.**

PRESENTATION: SLIDE CREATION

Keep it SMART:

- 1. NEVER show a raw data table and proceed to say: “I know you can’t read this but it shows...” (If your audience can’t read it, then why would you show it?)**
- 2. Spellcheck your presentation. There is no excuse for misspelled words. (Even worse is to “apologize” for a misspelling on a slide, as everyone will be wondering why you didn’t take the time to fix the slide before showing it.)**

PRESENTATION: SLIDE CREATION

Loading your Talk:

- **Load your talk the day prior to your planned presentation. Yes, the day PRIOR. If you try to do it on the day of your presentation, there will be problems (others in line in front of you, slides that won't work with no time to fix them, movies that won't run with no time to fix them, etc.)**
- ***Remember when your talk does not show properly and your movies don't run, telling the audience they ran great in the speaker ready room is of no consequence (and nobody will believe you anyway.)***

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Preparing your talk:

- 1. If this is one of your first presentations, then PRINT IT OUT on 5 x 8 inch index cards.**
- 2. Print your talk in a 14 or 16 FONT, bold type, and with a 1.5 or double spacing.**
- 3. Put into the written talk in capital letters (SLIDE) where each slide should go.**
- 4. Always script your final take home message or read what you have on that slide to the audience.**
- 5. Word count: speak no faster than 130 words a minute. (A 5 min. talk should only have 650 words.)**

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Preparing your talk:

- 6. Don't Fumble. Cut the upper right hand corner off of the first card and the upper left hand corner off of the second card and so on such that all odd cards are clipped in the upper right hand corner and the even cards are clipped in the upper left hand corner. This will make it easy for you to flip the cards during the talk.**

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Keep it SIMPLE:

Give the talk to someone with a college education who is NOT in your field. If they can't follow the talk then it is TOO complicated. (In general you can't make your talk simple enough. Remember your goal is to COMMUNICATE, not to prove to everyone how brilliant you are by giving a talk that only you and a few other people in the field can understand.)

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Speak with Confidence:

1. This is YOUR material. You know it better than anyone else in the room.
2. If you are nervous then DON'T look at the audience. **LOOK** at the wall in the back of the room. (Speak to the wall on the far left for 20 seconds, then turn your head slightly and speak to the back wall in the center of the room for 20 seconds, and then turn your head and speak to the wall on the far right for 20 seconds. This provides the audience with the illusion that you are looking at them. It will keep them awake!)

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Speak with Confidence:

- 3. If you are going to point things out on a slide, use the mouse. The mouse will show on all screens if you are lecturing in a large room which contains more than one projection screen. (Laser pointers, unless you are in a small room with one screen are passé. The laser beam will not show up well on a flat screen.)**

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Humor:

- 1. If you are young (i.e. under 35): Consider avoiding humor as it often comes off as hubris.**
- 2. A well timed piece of humor specific to your presentation given early in your talk, will keep your audience awake for the remainder of your talk. (People often will sleep through data, but nobody wants to miss a good laugh.)**
- 3. Make sure all humor is generic. No ethnic, gender, or off-color humor. If you offend one person, your humor has failed.**

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Handling questions:

- 1. Repeat each question you are asked so everyone in the audience hears the question.**
- 2. Thank the person asking the question. If it is a really good question, acknowledge such.**
- 3. Answer the question.**
- 4. If you don't know the answer, simply state "I don't know."**

PRESENTATION: SPEAKING TIPS

Handling questions:

- 5. Never hesitate to defer the question to the senior author if they are in the audience. (“Dr. _____ is better able to answer that question.”).**
- 6. If the question points out a flaw in your data or experimental design don’t get defensive – if it is a good point, acknowledge it and move on.**

PRESENTATION: WHY?

Don't Forget:

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