

Communication

Oral & Poster presentations

Applications/Interview

Oral Presentation

- Giving a good talk is an essential skill for researchers and instructors.
- You want feedback on your data or ideas, so put them across well.
- In creating your presentation, think like a reporter and answer the "who, what, why, how, and where" questions.

Remember

- The main reasons for a presentation are to inform, to persuade or for a call to the action. It's *not* to distract. Use additional objects such as a chart, a drawing, an animation *to improve* the understanding of the message.
- Begin with the end. Give your conclusion and take the rest of the time to explain it. Don't forget a reminder at the end of the presentation.

General tips

- Tell 'em what you're gonna tell 'em, then tell 'em, then tell 'em what you've told 'em.
- Accumulate all the necessary material for the presentation; much more than necessary. You have to be ready for just about anything and everything.
- Collect questions you are asked and the answers you give. Prepare extra slides to answer expected questions.

Organization

Three devices can put a presentation in the desired perspective.

- Indicate the scope of the presentation by an informative title.
- "Zoom in" to the topic during the introductory segment of the presentation and "zoom out" near its end.
- Decide on the underlying question that the presentation seeks to address; then divide that question into a hierarchically organized array of subquestions, and develop the presentations as a series of answers to these questions.

Organization

- Sidetracks from this mainstream should be brief and should always return to the same point in the mainstream where they started.
- Omit information not directly relevant to the focus of the presentation, and avoid backtracking
- statements should delineate a clear, logical line of thought.

Organization

- Formulate explanations of scientific concepts and experimental (or theoretical) methodology unambiguously
- Do not use professional jargon.
- The presentation should end with a clearly formulated, concise conclusion. When the take-home message has been delivered, stop.

Practical tips I

- Be honest. If you don't have the answer to a question, say it at once.
- Vary the tone of the voice on the important points of your presentation or according to the presented material. Don't put too much of it!
- To end the presentation gently, add a black slide at the end of the presentation. So, when the slide show ends, you'll not return to slide mode.

Practical tips II

- The text of slides consists of keywords. It's up to you to explain them and to give them meaning.
- Do not overload a slide. The audience should be capable of finding quickly the main point of the slide. Be clear and precise.
- Add an object, or a text, **ONLY** if it helps the understanding of the main point.
- Be consistent ! Use the same presentation format, the same type of characters in the same size throughout your presentation.

Practical tips III

- Do not put more than 6 points per slide for bullet lists.
- The main title of the slide should be on a single line. limit yourselves to a maximum of 5 in 7 words for the title.
- Try to have the best possible contrast between your text and the back of your presentation.
- To have the best possible effect, use 2 or three colors for the slide.
- Do not use the red or green colors to put of the accent on a word or on an object. Between 10 % and 15 % of the population have difficulty differentiating these colors.
- Have a limited no. of slides (2-3 min. per slide)

Practical tips IV

- Assure that the font is big enough to be legible even from behind of the room used for the presentation.
- Use a single font: Helvetica, Times
- Don't write a text in capital letter.
- Before presenting, check the spelling.
- Don't learn by heart your presentation.
- Be interested in the subject, it's contagious! Especially if the subject is well explained in terms that the audience understands.

Practical tips V - Presentation

- Set time aside for practice
- Are your explanations understandable?
- Talk to the audience, not to the screen/floor/projector.
- Read out axis labelling of graphs
- Anything out of the ordinary gives a presentation that special memorable touch, setting it apart from others.
- don't read your slide. restate the points in your own words and elaborate on them
- Look convinced. Act convinced.

Nervous?

- Nervousness is healthy-it shows that the presentation is important to you and that you care about doing well.
- Relax. Take a deep breath
- Concentrate on the message, not on how you are coming across.
- Use eye contact.
- Do not apologize
- Forget perfection
- Learn to laugh at yourself
- Build in appropriate humor
- Going From Good to Great (ask for feedback)

Poster presentation

- Consider a poster primarily as an opportunity for exchange of ideas and dialogue, rather than merely a forum for data presentation
- The poster should be aesthetic and clean. Simplicity above all.
- Remember that it is not the number of people who come to view your poster, but the quality of interactions with them that determines its success.

Poster presentation

The poster should tell a *story*.

Include only material relevant to the story line.

- Choose brief and informative title.
- In upper left hand corner, provide concise introduction that indicates why work presented is important within context of a major scientific principle.
- Describe approach in an engaging, condensed style without excessive detail.
- Organize presentation of data in a logical, coherent sequence.
- In lower right hand corner, state small number of well-phrased conclusions and a major, concise summary statement.

Job Application

- A good CV is well presented, simple and easy to the eye (give it to someone who knows you well to check)
- A bad CV is longer than two pagers, confusing to read and contains spelling mistakes –check what exactly is required
- Point to get across: You have the ability to learn from your experiences and apply them to what you want to do next
- You really have to sell yourself – persuade the employer that you are the person for the job

Job Application

- Think of the extra skills you have picked up
- Target your CV and letter to the job you are applying to, highlight the skills that are needed for that very job
- Do some research about the company etc. you are applying to – before you apply

Job Interview

- Be yourself, don't try to act differently during an interview
- Know your CV inside out
- Do your homework (know the company/institute)
- Prepare questions for the employer
- Know your strengths and weaknesses

Job Interview

- Watch your body language (positive, interested)
- Look at the person you are talking to
- Come in TIME
- Interviews are two way streets.
- Prepare for the interview

Practical tips – extra sources

Web sites with advice for writing papers and giving presentations:

- <ftp://parcftp.xerox.com/pub/pop196/vanLeunenLipton>
- <ftp://fast.cs.utah.edu/pub/writing-papers.ps>
- <http://www.physics.ohio-state.edu/~wilkins/onepage/terribletalk.ps>
- <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs/usr/mleone/web/how-to.html>
- <http://www.physics.ohio-state.edu/~wilkins/onepage/>

A Career in Science

Discussion

(approx. 6 per group / 6 groups – mix: senior, student):

Summary by each group for everybody (max. 5 min.):

- 1) Science and Society: the role of research in the economic and social welfare of nations, sustainable and appropriate development, the role of a researcher in developing science policy and education of public
- 2) Science and Society: gender roles in scientific careers; management of gender issues in a research environment

A Career in Science

Discussion:

- 3) Science Management: How to design a science project, human resource management, training, national/international collaborations, financing research, intellectual property, conflict resolution, the peer-review concept
- 4) Science Communication: the communication of scientific ideas for a technical/non-technical audience, development of research proposals, oral and/versus poster presentation of results