WORKSHOP

GIVING A SCIENTIFIC ORAL PRESENTATION

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Presentation style
How to present

Experienced speaker:
- Speaks freely
- Talks directly to the audience
- No text on slides, only figures

Unpracticed speaker:
- Bullet points on slides
- NEVER use note cards!
- Remember half-time slide and adjust your speed

Why bullet points?
- Helps you remember what to say
- Audience tends to look more at slides than at you
- Distracted audience can dive in
Rehearsal

- Write down your whole presentation in the spoken language
- DO NOT learn by heart, but read a few times and then throw away
- Your real presentation is typically 10% faster (missed a detail, speak a little faster, …)
- Practice (at least) once in upright position with presenter

- Most efficient cure for stage fright!
Guidelines for putting your audience to sleep

- Dark the room. Close the curtains. Show overloaded and cluttered slides. Don’t move and stay on the exact same spot. Don’t use your hands.

- Read your lecture from notes without looking up. Read with monotonous voice.

- Don’t show pictures, only show lots of text. Use complicated sentences and special words. Procrastinate your rehearsal of the presentation.

- Don’t wake them up. Let them snore….
Keep the audience interested

- Use focussing sentences (This is the central message. This is particularly interesting, because...)
- Emphasis with voice and gesture
- Planned breaks
- Eye contact
- Give instructions (Image..., remember...., Think about...)
- Personal anecdote, examples (ONLY if adequate)

Adapted from Meiners, Steidle
No go - wording

- I don’t know if this matters, but…
- I don’t have the time to explain it, but…
- I hope you can understand this…
- Eh… Em… So…
- This is not visible here, but…
- This should look different.
- This was it. Questions? (abrupt end)
How to present - technical equipment

- Get information on laptop, microphone, presenter in advance (available or bring)
- Bring your presentation as .pptx + .pdf
- Test in advance = be early
- Are movies/sound working?
- Advantage of presenter mode: don’t be surprised by your next slide + have a timer counting
Body language

- Where do I put my hands?
- No go: stand in front of the screen
- Right or left from screen?
- Eye contact-triangle

- Stand upright!
- Smile!
- Breathe!
- Look at the audience!
Questions: Friend or enemy?

- Leave time for questions
- They give you important feedback on your research/presentation
- Anticipate possible questions within your presentation
- Give a test run: questions here are likely to come after the real deal
- Know your topic!
- Do not answer to the individual person but to the whole audience
- Answer short and precise
- NEVER be rude!
- Thank person for the question
Critical questions/ ‘I don’t know’

You didn’t get the question:
- Articulate problem (volume, content, language)
- Ask for help (louder, rephrase)
- Offer alternatives (ask Chair, discuss later)

Criticism:
- NEVER be rude!
- Acknowledge comment
- Say thanks for input

You don’t know the answer:
- Do not make something up!
- Be honest, propose solution (answer later, check with literature, discuss)
Practice presentation style

Prepare the presentation of one of your slides!

Remember:

• Audience
• Key message
• Necessary information
• Explain from general to detailed info
• Animate slide? Use presenter?
• Clear language, body language
Dos and don’ts
Immediately prior to your presentation:

- Arrive in time and check **technical equipment**
- Look at the **room** from the stage and get familiar
- For longer talks: bring **water** (not sparkling!)
- Get **mentally** prepared, not panic
- Use the time during your introduction by the chairman to **breathe**
- Present yourself **motivated** and authentic
- Speak loud and **clearly**
- Speak to the **audience**, not the screen
- Stay in **time!** Look at your watch at half-time slide and adjust your speed.
## What can go wrong?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Solution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interruptions by the audience</td>
<td>Do not get confused, refer to a later opportunity to ask questions or answer quickly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor results</td>
<td>Be honest, discuss scientifically, give perspective on next steps/open questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Too fast/ too few slides</td>
<td>No excuses, get slower, give an extended summary, Attention: No unnecessary repetitions!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running out of time</td>
<td>Always stay in your time slot! Restrict yourself to the very key message of each slide, skip details, be precise, jump to the summary slide, but never skip the summary!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Stage fright

- Be prepared! Practice, practice, practice!
- Learn the first (and only first) sentences!
- Breath!
- Get in contact with your audience, they are just people
Self-reflection

- What went great?
- What didn’t?
- What caused anxiety?
- Did people listen?
- Did I get any feedback?
- What should be different next time?
Take-home messages

- Tell a story
- Transport your key message
- Transport it both verbally and non-verbally
- Be authentic