Objectives

• Planning the presentation
• Structuring the story
• Preparing the presentation
• Practising the presentation
• Delivering the presentation
• Q & A

Obstacles

• Failure to motivate audience
• Confusing structure
• Gaps in logic / uncertainty
• Poor delivery
• Poorly designed slides
• Excessive details

ACT 1: PLAN

Goals/Outline: Central message

Know your audience

Know your material

Goals/Outline

• Summarise your central message in 2-3 sentences
• Outline into 3 segments
  • Introduction
  • Body
  • Conclusion

Know your audience

• Always prepare each presentation for every individual occasion, with specific audience in mind
  • departmental seminars
  • professional meetings
  • Conference talks
  • job interview
Know your material

• Makes you credible
• Inspires trust and confidence
• Answer questions clearly

Analyse other talks

• Listen to other talks and analyse
  • What did you like?
  • What was really irritating?
• Grade each talk
  • Grade organization and content
  • Grade presentation
• Be critical

What to do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster</th>
<th>Oral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content – heavy, complicated</td>
<td>limited scope with clear, concise points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively informal, one to one / one to few</td>
<td>More formal, one to many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible time limit</td>
<td>Allotted time limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience free; Only interested audience</td>
<td>Audience more captured, likely to leave chiefly more from the speaker with short Q/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Q/A; conversational discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACT 2: STRUCTURING YOUR STORY

Telling the story

• Focus on the central message
• Zoom in at the start
• Phrase the basic idea as a question
• Break into sub-questions
• Zoom out in the end
• Conclude with a take-home message
• Don’t sidetrack / backtrack
• Avoid jargons

Sample: Structure

• Title page
• An attention-grabber
• Outline
• Introduction / background
• Body / main part
• Summary / conclusion
Sample: Title Page

- Title of the talk
- Name, Institution
- Collaborators
- Acknowledgements (grants, etc.)
- An informal visual

Sample: Introduction / Background

- Put your talk into a broader context
- Describe motivating applications
- Identify those who have done related work
- Minimise background material
  - 2/3 of talk should be original work

Sample: Body / main part

- Emphasize your simple message
- Back it up with details of experiment and theory
- Use pictures and diagrams
- Keep notation to a minimum
- Avoid too many abbreviations
- Never use equation numbers
- Repeat the equation if necessary
- Illustrate your points through simple examples

Sample Talk: Summary

- Repeat what you did
- Repeat why it is important
- Future work – beyond your thesis problem
- Include contact info

ACT 3: PREPARING YOUR PRESENTATION

Methods to present data

- Text Slides
- Visual media
  - Charts and Tables
  - Drawings / diagrams
  - Graphic images
  - Photographs
  - Audio / Video
  - Simulations
Preparing an Effective Scientific Presentation
Kiruthika Ragupathi
Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning (CDTL)
Copyright 2012, National University of Singapore
Visual Aids

- Use appropriate media elements
- Use readable graphs/tables
- Avoid using pictures/sounds that distract
- Beware of copyrighted materials

Don't say it, show it

- Clarifies and emphasises key points
- Increase impact/understanding
- Enhance learner attention
- Help control nervousness
- More stimulating
- Increases speaker’s ability
- Adds variety and credibility
- Reduces delivery time

The final pass

- Is your presentation structured well?
  - Examine your structure carefully
- Does your title emphasise the right things?
  - Improve on the titles
- Are your visuals appropriate?
  - Improve/change, if inappropriate
  - Usually, at least half of them can be improved

ACT 4: PRACTICE

- Always rehearse
  - Run through from beginning to end
  - Cut some content if you went overtime
  - Mark/select slides that can be skipped
  - Prepare – then relax

Time

- Pay attention to timing
- Assign defined time to each segment, e.g.,
  - Introduction (10 min)
  - Body (30 min)
  - Conclusion (5 min)
- Never exceed allotted time
  - 80% of allotted time

ACT 5:
DELIVERING YOUR PRESENTATION

- Tune your message to your audience
- Repeat the message over and over again throughout the talk
  - Tell them what you will tell them
  - Tell them
  - Tell them what you have told them
- Keep the content of the talk focused on the central message
Tips for Delivery

• Starting out is the hardest part of the talk
• Don’t apologize or make comments about yourself
• Be enthusiastic
• Always give proper credit
• Avoid blocking the audience view
• Figure out which slide is your half-way mark and use that to check your time

For an oral presentation

• Enthusiasm
• Voice control
• Eye contact
• Postures and gestures
• Nervousness
• Laser pointer

For a poster presentation

Frequent mistakes to avoid
• No presenter present
• Unclear/inappropriate structure
• Information overload
• Poor illustrations

Closing

• Be brief and concise
• Relate back to the specific objectives
• Avoid all irrelevant details

Conference Talk (15-20min)

• Title/author/affiliation (1 slide)
• Outline (1 slide)
• Introduction / Background
  • Motivation and Problem Statement (1-2 slides)
  • Related Work (1 slide)
  • Methods (1 slide)
• Results (4-6 slides)
• Summary (1 slide)
• Future Work (1 slide)
• Backup Slides

SAMPLES / EXAMPLES
Formal lecture

- Opening
  - Start with an outline, Never start with a joke
  - Attention-getter
  - Focus on central, exciting concept
- Main content
  - One paragraph overview
  - Example
  - Put demos at the end
- Closing
  - stop when done!
  - Say thank you

Sample poster

Handling questions

- Anticipate questions - a list of previously-asked questions
- Repeat the question
- Don’t worry about stopping to think
- Be polite & gracious
- Answer briefly
- Defer contentious conversations

Take home messages (Do’s)

- Allow plenty of time to prepare your talk
- Practice!
- Know your audience
- Use appropriate graphics
- Clarity, clarity, clarity
- Keep to your time
- Be personable in taking questions
- Enjoy and learn from your mistakes

Take home messages (Don’ts)

- Don’t put in too much material
- Don’t waste time at the start
- Don’t block the slides during the talk
- Avoid using too many equations
- Avoid making distracting sounds

Questions?

Resources for Students

Workshop Presentations

Thank you

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