Oral Presentations

ENEL300

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Neville Watson gave us a lecture about "Oral Presentations" on the 17th of September 2020. Watson is an electrical engineering professor at the University of Canterbury (UC). His research lies in the field of power.

Watson's 3 main points he talked about in his lecture were:

- Oral preparation – the What, Why, How?
- What should be in it?
- How to layout information?

Oral preparation – the What, Why, How?

Watson talked about a range of different points explaining:

- **What** an engineering oral presentation is
- **Why** you should do one
- **How** you should present it

What
- Telling the audience, a story about the purpose of your design.
- What the system does?

Why
- Will have to do them throughout your career
- To get over the fear of public speaking
- Getting comfortable with expressing your work

How
- Firstly, you need to plan i.e. structure – (only relevant/**main** information)
  o Brainstorming
  o Plan it so you tell a story
  o If structured well, don't have to come back not restructure
  o Don't give the audience too much information (main information only)
- Determining **main points**
  1. Identify main points – (Tell it straight to the audience)
  2. Take home points – (What do you want them to remember)
  3. 3-5 main points only
  4. Structure presentation to support your main points
- Capturing the audience's attention from the start by:
  o What they want
  o Their knowledge about your design
  o Their gaps
  o Their value

  Keep it simple by pitching your design to the level of the audience (find a good mean)

- Distributing your efforts
  o Verbal – 15 % (using words in a way to capture your audience)

- o Vocal – 20 %   (volume, tone, expression, pitch & speech
- o Visual – 65 %   (It's okay to look at your notes but if you do it too much you lose the attention of your audience)
- Make a good first impression
    - o Tell them what you are going to tell them
    - o Conclusion and Introduction are short but are the most important parts

What should be in it?

Watson talked about a range of different points explaining the structure about what should go into your report in terms of:

- Introduction
- Main body
- Conclusion
- Handling Aggressive/Tough Questions

Introduction
- o A big factor in the make or break of the success for your presentation – Make sure you interest the audience, otherwise they tune out
- o Give it to the audience straight
- o Clear layout of your talk

Main body
- o 3-5 main points
- o 2-4 slides max for each point
- o Give more detail
- o Increase complexity of talk – start simple so everyone starts at relatively the same level
- o Done go to technical
- o Make simple analogies for complex material

Conclusion
- o Remind them of the main points (summary)
- o Take home points

Handling Aggressive/Tough Questions
- o Handling the pressure when someone asks you a difficult question
- o Politely ask the person to rephrase the question if the question they asked didn't make sense or if you need more time to think about the question.
- o Admit if you do not know how to say something. Don't make something up
- o Don't insult them if that person asked a bad question - Find a way to pin a bad question into a good one

How to layout information?

Watson talked about a range of different points explaining how information should be laid out on power point:

- Visual appearance
  - Use power point properly by keeping it simple and only use relevant talking material
  - How each slide is going to look
  - Nicely space out everything
  - > 24 size font – for people at the back
- Workings – technical detail
  - Keep it short and sweet, don't give them to much or little to process
  - Nicely laid out
  - Relevant information only
- Illustrations – Also showed us IEEE examples
  - Keep it short and sweet, don't give them too much or little to process
  - Nicely laid out - no Clutter
  - Relevant images or figures – talk to and about them
- Duration
  - 7 minute presentation
  - 5 minutes for you talking
  - 2 minutes for questions
  - Practice saying your presentation

Additional key take-home points

- Oral preparation – the What, Why, How?
  - Plan your presentation well
  - Figure out your main points
  - Grabbing the audience's attention
  - Distributing the manner, you want to say something – keep audience in mind
  - Keep it interesting for the audience
- What should be in it?
  - Keep introduction short and sweet – tell them what you're going to tell them
  - Main body – Capture the audience's attention, predict what they'll find interesting
  - Conclusion – Take home points
  - Hard questions – relax and answer it to the best of your ability
- How to layout information?
  - Visual appealing to the audience
  - Keep it nice and neat
  - Keep it simple – don't confuse them
  - Setting time limits for each section