

1. GENERALITIES

- **Know your audience and tell a story:** each presentation should be adapted to your target audience.
- **Always think about your message first, then your slides:** people will generally remember only 1/10 of your talk. This should be the take-home message that you aimed for.
- **Absolutely stick to the time allowed:** there is nothing worse than a presentation that drags on and on. This will upset your audience, the organisers and any following speakers. Finishing on time is a sign of respect towards your audience.
- **Consider text as your enemy:** the brain cannot both read and listen at the same time. Use as little text as possible and consider your slides as a way to *enhance* your presentation and not *be* your presentation. Never read your slides when presenting.
- **Consider visual materials as your friend:** clear, concise and carefully chosen photos can greatly enhance your message without distracting your audience from your speech.
- **Be consistent with the design of your slides:** use similar typography, colours and theme throughout your presentation. Make your audience comfortable and feel that your presentation is coherent and harmonious.
- **Highlight any topic transitions:** it is easy for your audience to miss a change of topics. Show it clearly in your presentation by dedicating slides with a common theme for this.
- **Make your technical graphs clear, simple and explain it orally:** make sure your graphs display well, include the necessary data (title, legend, axis etc...) but exclude superfluous ones. Have ideally one graph per slide and describe it during your presentation, not through text.
- **Avoid equations if not essential:** otherwise take time to explain them well orally. Loosing your audience in complicated math will not make you look smarter.
- **Always cite your co-authors and sources:** recognition of other people input in your work is important. Imagine what you would feel if someone is describing your work but not cite your name for it.

2. CORE CONTENT

- **Start by motivating your audience:** the start of your presentation is key to retain interest from your audience until the end. Introduce the topic of your presentation and follow by describing why it is important. Make a slide with a clear problem statement. Do not be too technical at this point and always avoid text.
 - **Describe related work:** showing that you know your peers is important for various reasons. It first comfort your audience that you know your field. It also shows respect for other's work and finally it make your own work more valuable by emphasizing the importance of your work.
 - **Your contribution and results:** this is the body of your presentation. Again think about the take-home message you want to convey and avoid going into every details of your work. Show your main results only and use visuals in order to provide accurate mental pictures to your audience. Acknowledging openly any weaknesses in your work during the presentation avoids embarrassing questions after your talk.
 - **Future works:** it is unlikely that you have nailed down the problem in a way that there is nothing to do after your work. Describe what needs to be done, what needs to be improved and the directions of your work in that field (if any).
 - **Conclude:** this is where you repeat your key message and results so that your audience will remember it better. Make it short but efficient.
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3. THE PHYSICAL PRESENTATION

- **Rehearse your speech:** practice as many times as needed until you have a smooth intelligible speech. Avoid any fillers like "hum" or "uh" that undercut your effectiveness. The more you practice, the less stressed you will be. Speak clearly and not too fast.
- **Know your body language:** be relaxed and open. Do not cross your arms, put your hands in your pocket or show your back to your audience.
- **Get your tools ready:** make sure your laptop is charged and know how to use it. Test that it connects without problems to the projector or screen. Bring your laptop power supply. Use a remote mouse. Have a backup of your presentation on USB key. It is also a good idea to have a PDF version ready in case of software problems. Make sure you can track time during your presentation by having a watch or a timer next to your laptop (not on your wrist!).
- **Introduce yourself briefly:** especially if the audience does not know you.
- **Connect with your audience:** avoid looking at your slides when not pointing at something. Look at the people in the room and notice their reactions. This will help improve your presentation for next time.

4. RECOMMENDED DEFAULT SETTINGS

- **Number of slides:** a general rule of thumb is that the number of slides should not be more than 2/3 of the number of minutes allowed.
- **Fonts:** use absolutely sans-serif fonts, e.g. Calibri. Font size should not be too big or too small, around 20 points is generally recommended.
- **Slide transitions:** usually to be avoided as it distracts your audience and somehow suggests that your slides are uninteresting. If used, be subtle.
- **Colors:** some colours must be avoided as they are badly displayed on screen or by projectors. Prefer desaturated colours over saturated ones. Blue text is often undistinguishable from black text.
- **Video and audio media:** do not use autoplay. Make sure they integrate well in the flow of your presentation and that the required devices are available in the room.

5. LINKS TO SOURCES AND FURTHER READINGS

- [Small Guide To Giving Presentation by Markus Püschel](#)
- [10 tips on how to make slides that communicate your idea, from TED's in-house expert](#)
- [Slide:ology by Nancy Duarte. O'Reilly, 2008](#)