



## Objectives

1. To explain the nature of oral presentation as a form of communication
2. To go through some technical issues of oral presentation
3. To prepare and deliver an introduction and conclusion of your honours mid-year presentation



## Presentation in contexts

- Quite a common form of communication in academic/professional contexts
  - As a means of communication with your colleagues (e.g. supervisory meetings, project briefing, seminars, conferences, symposiums)
  - As a means of communication with the stakeholders of your project (e.g. clients, sponsors, partner institutions)
  - As a means of teaching (e.g. lectures, tutorials)
  - As a means of communication with general public (e.g. press conference)



## The nature of presentation as a form of communications

- Pros
  - Spontaneous communication with your audience, i.e. you can 'go with a flow' to some extent
  - Can be supplemented by visual/audio materials
  - You can control the audience's engagement
- Cons
  - Difficult if you are not a spontaneous sort of person.
  - You need specific skills as a public speaker
  - Limited time, and you can do it only once (generally).
  - Limited number of audience



## A good presentation?

- A good presentation is a presentation that makes the audience *feel like* they learnt something.
  - A good presentation will win the audience conviction (cf. my discussion on the nature of academic communication in the last session)
  - A cynic would say: Even if the content is not so amazing, you can present in an amazing way.
- Articulation and consistency is important to deliver an effective presentation.



## Consistency in oral presentation

- In writing, consistency is based on the balanced emphasis
- In oral presentation, consistency is based on the relevance of the information
  - Decide which parts of the presentation will be the 'highlights', and design the presentation in a way to illuminate those parts.
  - Continuously refer back to your own project – to show how each of the information you are presenting feeds back to the overall argument.



## Articulation in oral presentation

- “You must start well, and you must end well. What is in the middle is not so important, because no one is listening then.” (said Maurice Chevalier once upon a time)
- The moral of the story?
  - Start well by clearly stating what you try to do in the presentation. A slide for a list of objectives and/or structure of the presentation is always a good idea.
  - Always prepare a ‘take-home’ message as to conclude your presentation, not to mention this must correspond with your objectives stated at the beginning.



## Audience

- ... is the biggest contributor to the success of your presentation.
- Understand 'who is talking what to whom', and tune your presentation in for your audience.
  - e.g. In your preliminary presentation, you as an honours student is talking to your fellow students and the faculty staff how your project is going.
- The audience find it more comfortable when they are given clear roles.
  - Set the context at the beginning
- The audience feel more comfortable when they know what to expect in the presentation
  - Give the audience frequent indications of where it all goes.



## Some technical issues you probably have already heard of (so just as a brief checklist)

- How you speak...
  - Posture, voice, language, pace, body/hand movements, reliance on notes, and how you dress
- How the materials were delivered...
  - Visuals, audio, demonstration
  - Timing, new (or old) technology, reliance on the visual aids
- Slides:
  - Colours, words, structure/design, tone, animation, balance with other slides and conclusiveness
- Logistics and others:
  - Technology, time, drinks, MCs, manners while you are waiting (and after your presentation)

**Always ask yourself: *Why am I doing all this?***



## Types of information you will include in your presentation

- Usually, a preliminary presentation will look like an extended version of your proposal. It usually includes the following types of information.
  - Introduction
  - Background/Lit. review
  - Significance
  - Objectives (research questions)
  - Research designs, methodology and methods
  - Progress and expected outcomes



## Points to make in your talk (i.e. the aims of your presentation)

- Given the nature of your presentation being an extended proposal, you should aim to communicate with and convince your supervisors and colleagues that:
  - **The project is doable** – By demonstrating this, you also demonstrate that you understand what you will be doing and how you will do it.
  - **The project is worth doing** – By demonstrating this, you also demonstrate that you also have good knowledge of the relevant field(s).



## Common pitfalls

- It is a presentation about YOUR research
  - Don't spend too much time on background
  - The amount of time and efforts you have spent is not necessarily proportional to the amount of time you should spend in your presentation.
- Presentation is different from writing
  - You have the same information, but need to come up with a different approach for presentation.
  - Don't read out your proposal!!
- ***...and you shall see these point in the exercise.***



## *Exercise: Introduction and conclusion of your presentation*

- Prepare an introduction and conclusion for your mid-year presentation.
- Make sure to include in your introduction:
  - What you will be talking about;
  - What you will be doing in your presentation overall; and
  - How you will be delivering your presentation.
- Make sure to include in your conclusion:
  - What you did in your presentation;
  - The 'take home' message for your audience; and
  - Initiative for the audience.



## Small note on group presentation (again in the style of a checklist)

- Preparation is important...
  - Who's talking about what?
  - Always good to distribute slides, rather than themes.
- At the presentation...
  - Introduce everyone to the audience at the beginning, and explain who's doing what
  - Always make a good introduction to the next speaker
- After the presentation
  - Compliment each other anyway even if the presentation went seriously wrong