How to Give a Great Talk

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Why Bother Giving a Great Talk?

Goal: Advertise your work

- Get the audience to know something new

- Make the audience want to read your paper

Why need a great talk?

- The audience has one chance to hear the talk

- The audience hears many talks in one day

- Impress the audience

Advertise your work through a great talk

Giving a Great Talk is Hard

Distilling work down to twenty minutes not easy

Great talks require:

- Great slides
    - Require effort & time

- A lot of practicing

Outline

- Introduction

- What I did wrong in my first attempt …

- How to create great slides …

- What went wrong with my talk …

What I Did Wrong …

Started creating slides w/o a clear flow in mind
- End result: slides with no message

Content of slides didn't match with titles/punch lines
- End result: hard to follow

Didn't use pictures much

Gave a practice talk w/o great slides
- End result: waste of time

What needs to be done to give a great talk?

Getting Started …

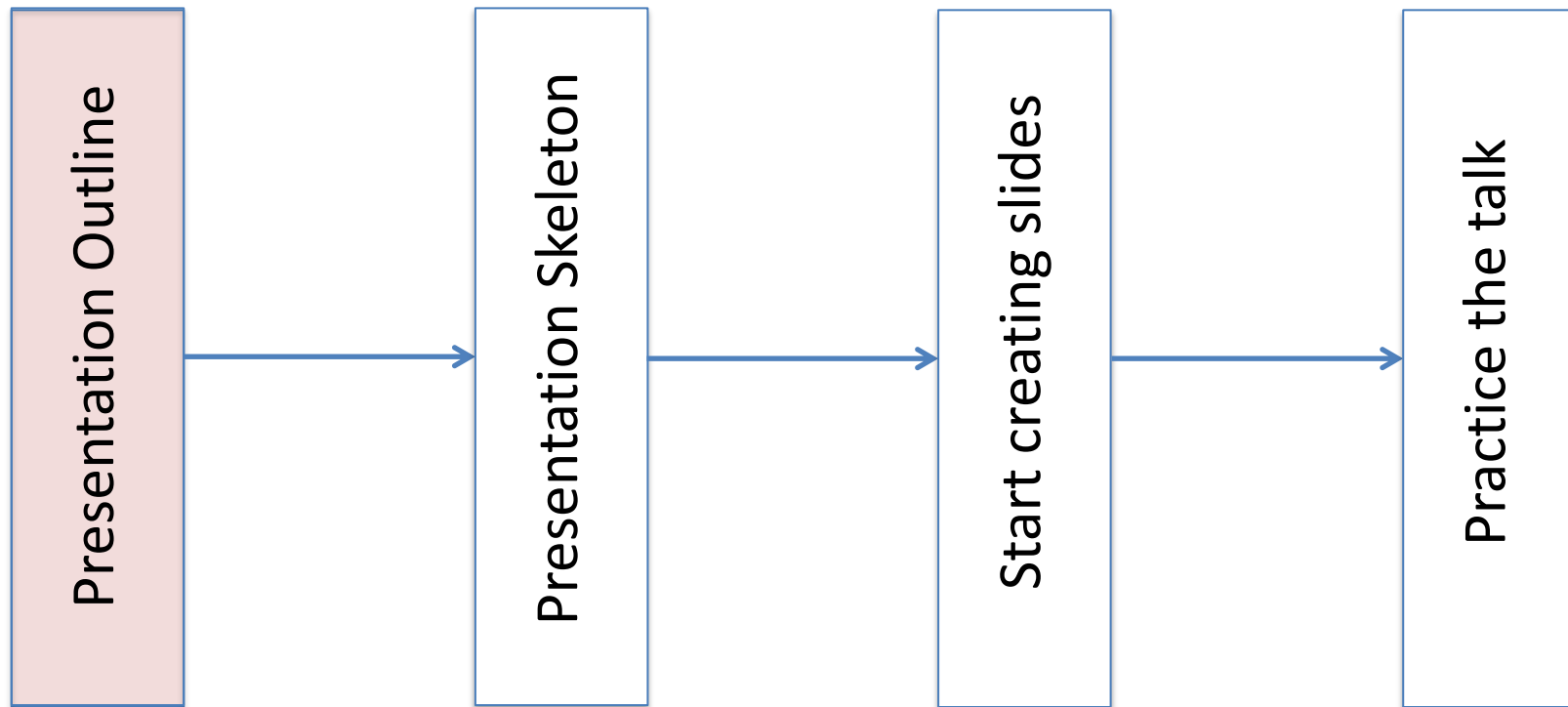Start working on the talk 6-8 weeks in advance

- 5-6 weeks to create great slides
- 1-2 weeks to practice the talk

Know your time budget

Focus on getting one key point across

Preparing a great talk requires several steps

Toward a Great Talk

Presentation Outline

Goal: Come up with a story that fits within your time budget

Case study for a 20-minute talk:

- Slide 1: Cover
- Slides 2-4: Frontend of the talk
- Slide 5: Outline
- Slides 6-15: Main body of the talk
- Slide 16: Outline
- Slides 17-19: Evaluation
- Slide 20: Conclusion

Increasing complexity

Work on each slide in reverse order

Evaluation

Goal: Present methodology and key results

1. Methodology (1 slide)

2. Results (2 slides)

- Present the ones that will support your point
- If anyone is interested for more, they can read the paper

Keep it simple and short

Main Body of the Talk

Goal: Present the key point based on your story

1. The first slide (i.e., slide 6) is super important
- That's where the audience gets triggered
  - Context related to your work
  - Context familiar to the audience

- Will set the tone of the talk

2. Continue with rest of the slides based on key points

Frontend of the Talk

Goal: Present gist of problem attacked and your contributions

1. The "Context" slide
For example:
- Manycore servers and importance of NoCs
- Need efficient NoCs

2. The "Problem" slide *(the most difficult one)*
- Think of this slide after everything else is done
- For example: Build efficient multi-network NoCs for servers

3. The "Contributions" slide
- Insights found, how you solved the problem, key results

Toward a Great Talk

Presentation Outline → Presentation Skeleton → Start creating slides → Practice the talk
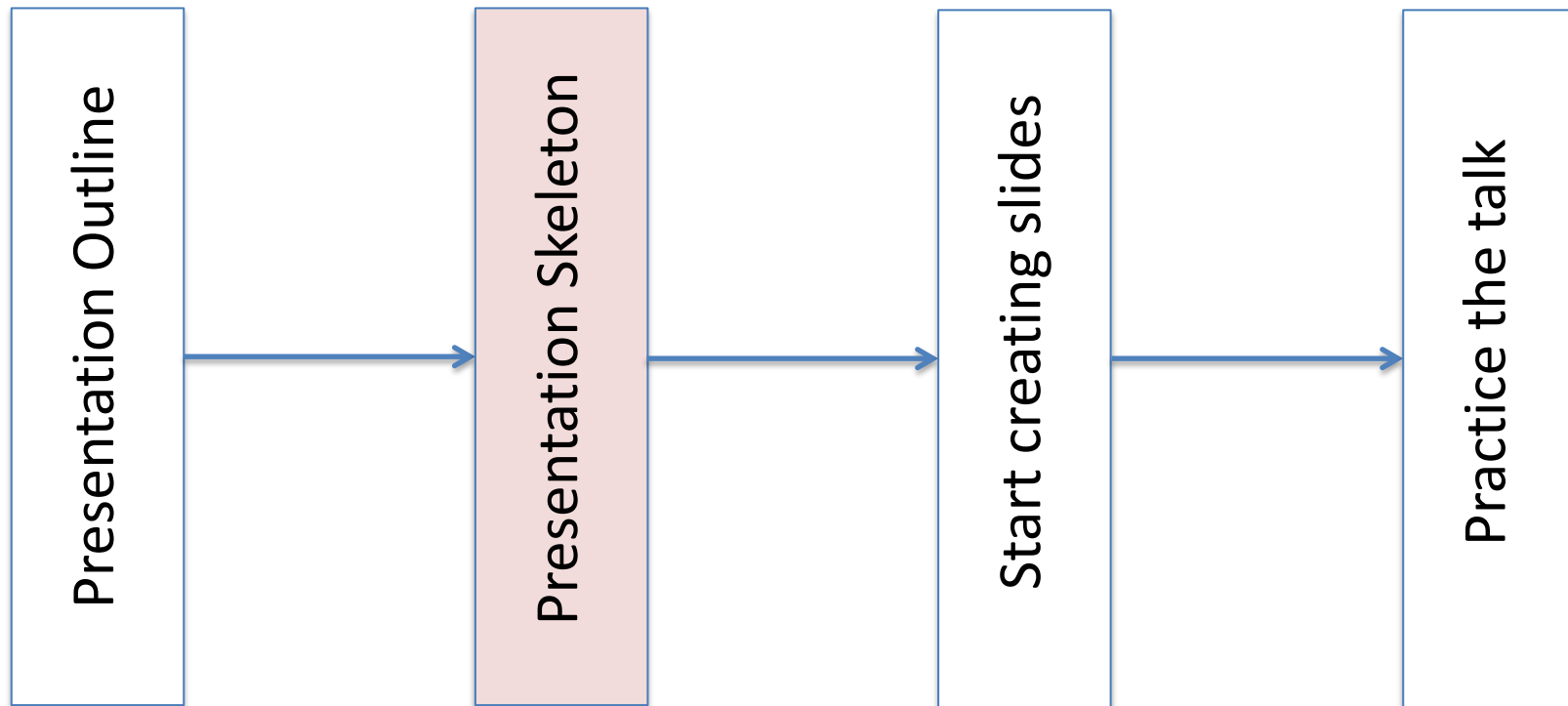
Presentation Skeleton

Goal: For each slide come up with a title & punch line

Titles & punch lines need to be compact

- People have to be able to get the story and the key point
- People have to be able to guess the content of the slide

Remember: Slides with weak punch lines go away

Need compact skeleton before moving to the next step

Now, you are ready to create slides

But, remember the following:

- If you cannot understand a slide, nobody will

- Use bullets to lead the audience to the slide's message
  - Use sub-bullets to provide more details, if necessary

- Don't underestimate pictures

- Keep the slide white and simple
  - Remove articles and verbs (need to be careful)

Now, you are ready to practice

Need to be fluent, calm, and excited

Ask people for

- High-level feedback

- Hard questions
    - Help you to create backup slides

Outline

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- How to create great slides …

- **What went wrong with my talk …**
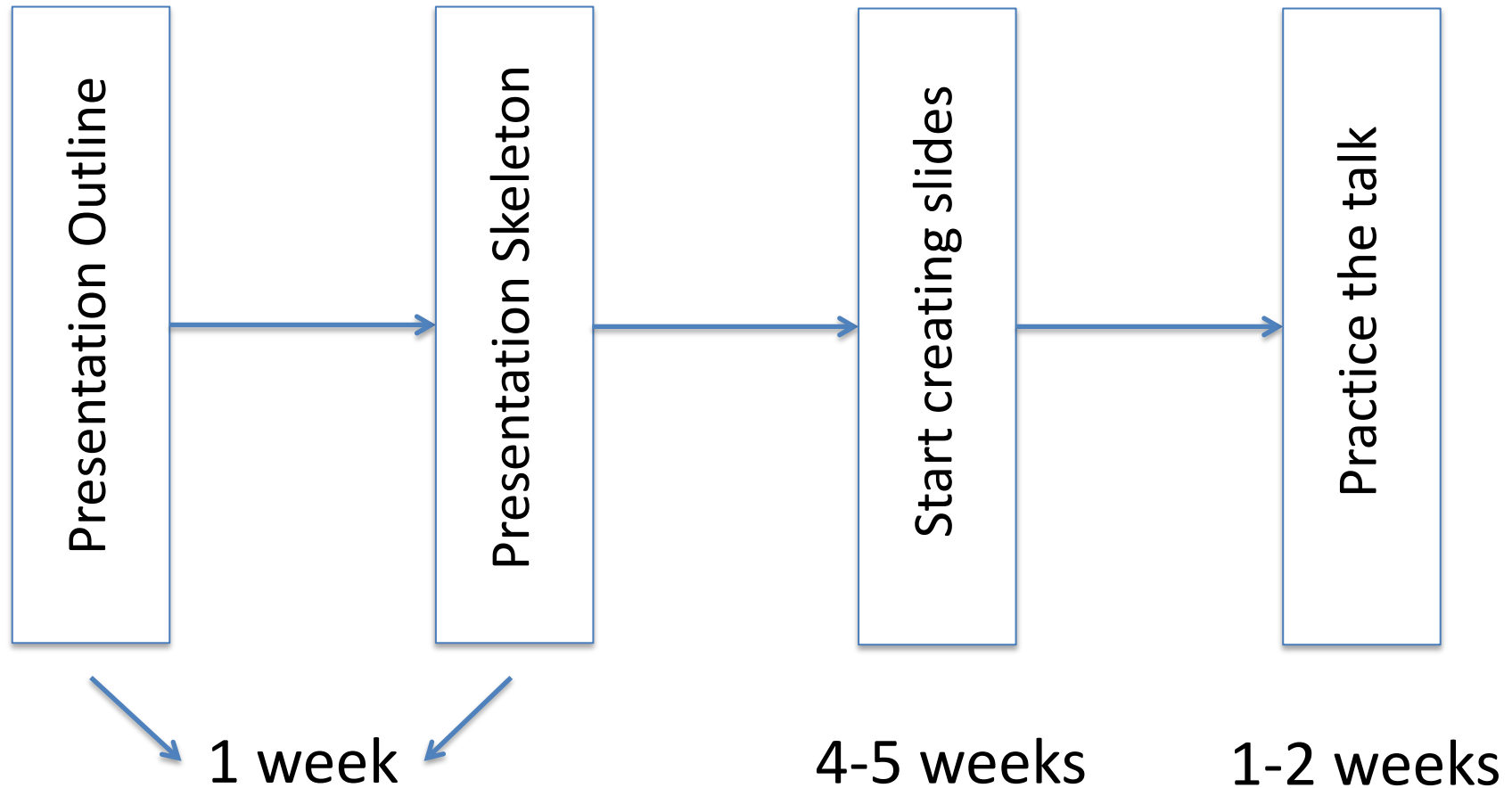
CCNoC Talk: Not Great

What went wrong?

- Got nervous and didn't look excited

- Failed during the Q/A
  - The answers to the questions were not concise

Why?

- Didn't have sufficient time to practice the talk
- Didn't prepare backup slides for possible questions

Toward a Great Talk

| Presentation Outline | Presentation Skeleton | Start creating slides | Practice the talk |

1 week   4-5 weeks   1-2 weeks

Need 6-8 weeks to prepare a great talk