INFO4990/5993 RESEARCH METHODS

Week 7b
Oral Presentations and
Peer Feedback

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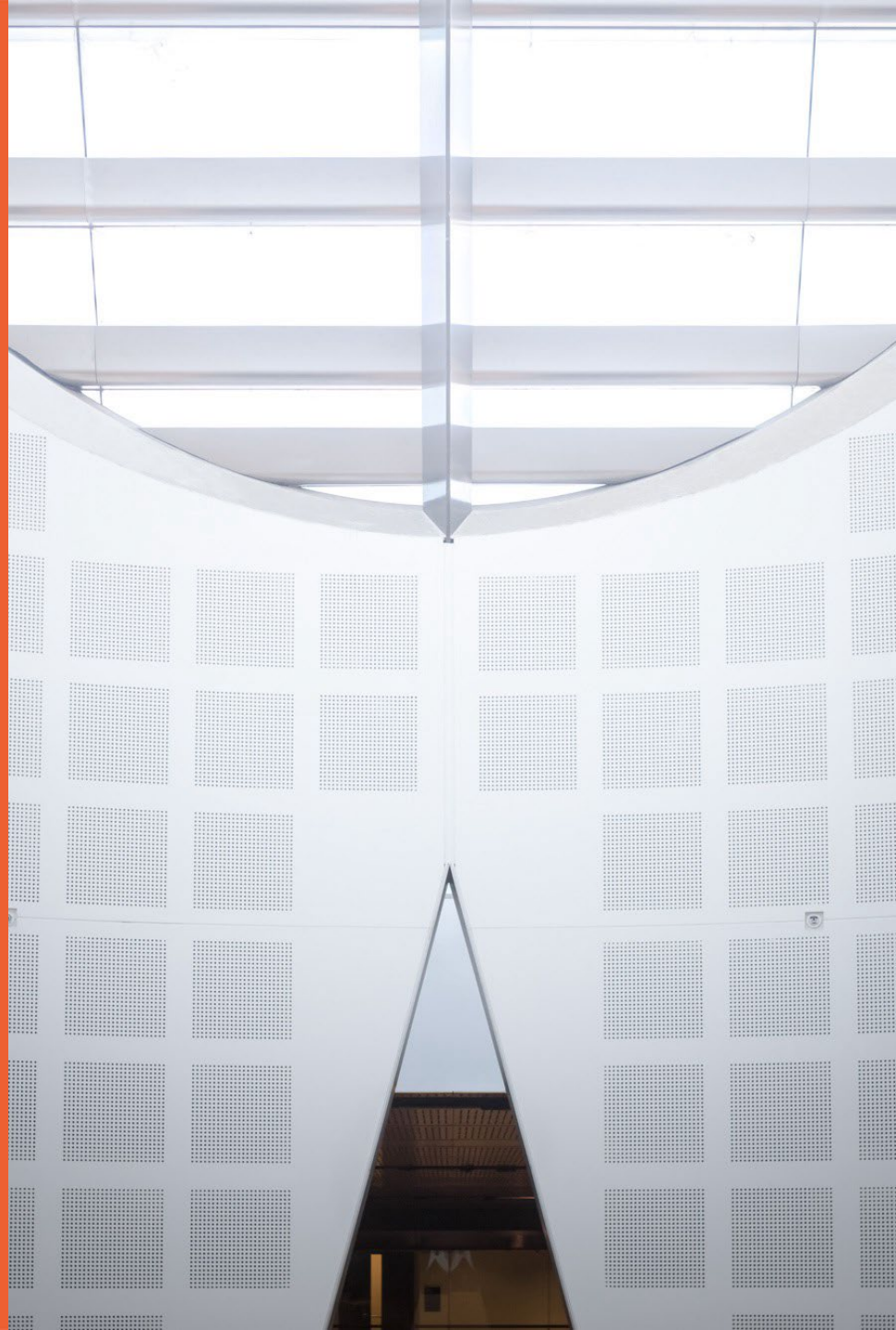

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Motivation

Why feedback and presentation skills matter?

- Feedback improves both presenter and audience learning.
- Oral skills are critical in academia & industry.

Outcome

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Identify characteristics of constructive feedback
- Provide specific, polite, and useful feedback
- Apply oral presentation skills effectively.

Agenda

- What is Feedback for?
- Characteristics of Good Feedback
- Feedback Examples
- Oral Presentation Components
- Skills of Delivering Presentation
- Presentation Examples

What is Useful Feedback?

Think and share:

- What feedback would be useful to you?
- What would you DISLIKE particularly when receiving this feedback?

What is Feedback for?

Aim of feedback:

- To improve the presenter's skills and performance
- Let them know WHAT is good, WHAT can be improved and suggest HOW it can be improved.

Characteristics of Good Feedback

A good feedback is:

- Honest and Fair – Share your genuine perspective without bias.
- Respectful and Polite – Phrase it as you would like to receive it; avoid harsh, offensive, or dismissive language.
- Constructive and Action-oriented – Go beyond pointing out issues by suggesting ways to improve.
- Specific and Clear – Identify concrete points (e.g., “explain your motivation in more detail”) rather than vague comments.
- Relevant and Focused – Stay on topic; avoid unnecessary details but provide enough explanation to be useful.

Example Progression

Basic feedback

XXX was able to finish the presentation on time and covered all required parts. He was also able to maintain a good interest from the audience using good presentation skills. He went off track during a couple of slides in literature review. Overall, I really liked the presentation.

A much more useful one

Your presentation was very good. It appeared to be well planned and rehearsed thoroughly. The material was presented in a logical order that is easy to follow. The time was managed well in general. However, I would probably suggest spending a little more time discussing your motivation, i.e., explaining why we need this geo-tagged information and how it can be useful (e.g., maybe mentioning a few real life applications).

The slides discussing the research method and results were unfortunately vague and minimal as support. It would be interesting to know how your algorithm works and what are the disadvantages, if any. Furthermore, showing the results of comparison to the available algorithms would be a good idea to further outline your achievements. Also, you have mentioned "downloading more images and using a different algorithm" as your future work. This makes it appear quite trivial, leading to the thought that the research was not successful and there is something wrong with your algorithm. Perhaps, you could rephrase it to say, that your solution demonstrates significant results but you are interested to see how other algorithms and available implementation behave compared to your solution? Overall the presentation did cover the required elements of motivation, research questions, critical literature review, research method, results, and future work.

In terms of presenting the material, a better eye contact with the audience would probably be an improvement in order to engage and interest the audience. The slides were well structured in general, except perhaps for the "results" section, where the tables were hardly readable.

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Another useful (and lengthier) one (1)

This seminar contributed to an understanding of linking SLA to Cloud Computing Energy Efficiency. The speaker motivates his research results of his conducted MIT Research. The focus is brought early on linking the ratio of SLA guarantee to power use as a missing parameter in the equations that are normally put forth to customers.

The seminar motivates well through a vocal illustration of the discrepancy of minimizing power and maximizing profit in cloud computing from the perspective of the resource providers. First the speaker refers to some related material to drive home the context of power required by data centers in a large territory (in the example used, USA is noted at using 1.5% of its total power in the grid). This helps bring context and importance as to why minimal power use should be examined alongside the relatively well known non-functional parameters such as security, availability and reliability.

The objectives set out are the determination of power-usage patterns for the later use as inputs to models of predication. While covered, the slide entitled Research Method does exhibit minor problems. A number of terms, particularly the relationship between the components/features to patterns are hard to understand. From an external point of view, this area is difficult to comprehend due to lack of background knowledge on the part of the audience. Whilst the presenter may be well aware of the material he is presenting, the particular explanation of the research method did go over the audience's head. Suggestions to solving this dilemma are:

- A hand out of slides with annotated text for the audience.
- A more thorough review of the slide.
- Annotation of the equations on the slide, such that indirect inference can take place.

Another useful (and lengthier) one (2)

Following from the results section, I also found some of the points of discussion interesting but difficult to digest. While the speaker does talk about mathematical correlations, it is not completely evident from the pictures and the speaker's verbal narration what the results actually mean. This misunderstanding has a number of implications that remove from the relevance of the reported results. Suggestions to fix these issues and to raise the importance of results are:

- Graphs should all have titles and basic x/y series.
- Graphs should all have a legend and/or some item indicating scale.
- There should be a common graph as baseline (preferably superimposed), so a quick comparison can be made.

These areas would be well served for the speaker to revisit in his explanation and would definitely improve upon the work presented.

Similar comments regarding the explanation of terms and symbols apply for the slides regarding prediction models.

The eye contact and level of engagement with the audience was well done, with relatively little reading from the slides on the part of the speaker.

Another useful (and lengthier) one (3)

Overall the presentation did cover the necessary elements of motivation and context, research question(s), critical literature review, research method, results and their conclusion and future work.

The seminar started off particularly strong; which did help carry it over some of the moot points (but by no means bad). In giving the presentation a meta-analysis, at times I was unsure if the research method was merely an algorithm that was chosen (there was a lack of discussion as to how the research method came about) and if the results were merely the product of tuning this particular method. The narration of the speaker was relatively well done considering the various parameters that were covered.

I would suggest that the speaker annotates slides with mathematical formulas on them, or otherwise refers to an appendix such that interested parties after the fact can look up the specific meanings of presented information.

I would also suggest the speaker carefully checks his slides for typographical errors, as the last slide in particular was entitled “Preferences”, though clearly I knew he meant “References”.

Oral Presentation Components

Motivation		Explain why the topic matters.
Structure		Present content in a logical sequence
Research Content		Present the core concepts, methods, or framework clearly.
Results		Show evidence that supports your claims.
Conclusion		Summarize the main message(s).

Skills of Delivering Presentation

- Engagement

  - Effective presenters actively involve the audience and sustain interest through delivery style.

- Clarity

  - Clear presentations use simple, well-structured language and visuals to convey ideas.

- Confidence and Audience Awareness

  - Confident presenters adapt to their audience while speaking with poise and control.

Skills of Delivering Presentation

Engagement

- Capture and maintain audience attention through voice variation, eye contact, and body language.
- Use questions, gestures, or visuals to keep the audience actively involved.
- Show enthusiasm for your topic — energy is contagious.
- **DO NOT**: Read monotonously from slides or ignore the audience.

Skills of Delivering Presentation

Clarity

- Organize ideas logically and explain them in accessible terms.
- Use simple, precise language and avoid unnecessary jargon.
- Support explanations with clear visuals (diagrams, graphs, or examples).
- **DO NOT**: Overload slides with jargon, dense text, or cluttered figures.

Skills of Delivering Presentation

Confidence and Audience Awareness

- Deliver your talk with steady pace, controlled tone, and professional posture.
- Anticipate your audience's background knowledge and adjust explanations accordingly.
- Respond calmly to questions, showing preparedness and respect for diverse perspectives.
- **DO NOT**: Rush, mumble, or dismiss audience questions.

Oral Presentation Components

Motivation	•Explain *why* the topic matters. •Highlight the problem, gap, or opportunity your research addresses. •Capture the audience's interest from the start.
Structure	•Present content in a logical sequence. •Use signposting (e.g., "First, I will… then…"). •Keep slides aligned with the spoken narrative.
Research Content	•Present the core concepts, methods, or framework clearly. •Ensure terminology is defined and accessible to the audience. •Use visuals (diagrams, tables) to support understanding.
Results	•Show evidence that supports your claims. •Present data in a clear, uncluttered format (graphs, figures, comparisons). •Emphasize the key findings, not every detail.
Conclusion	•Summarize the main message(s). •Reinforce the contribution and significance of the work. •Provide a forward-looking statement (future work, implications, applications)

Oral Presentation Components

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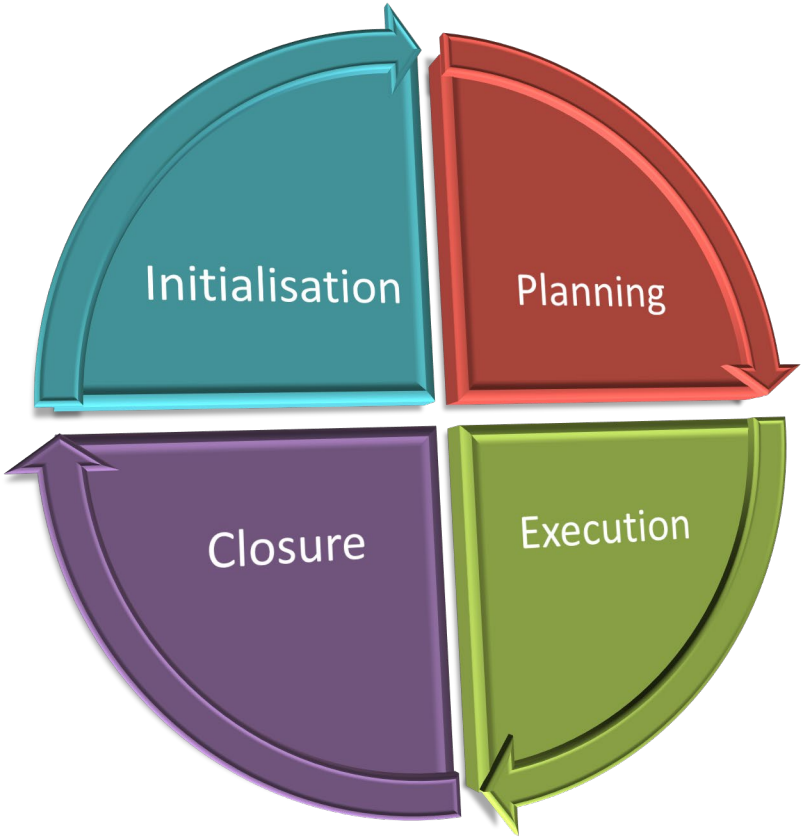
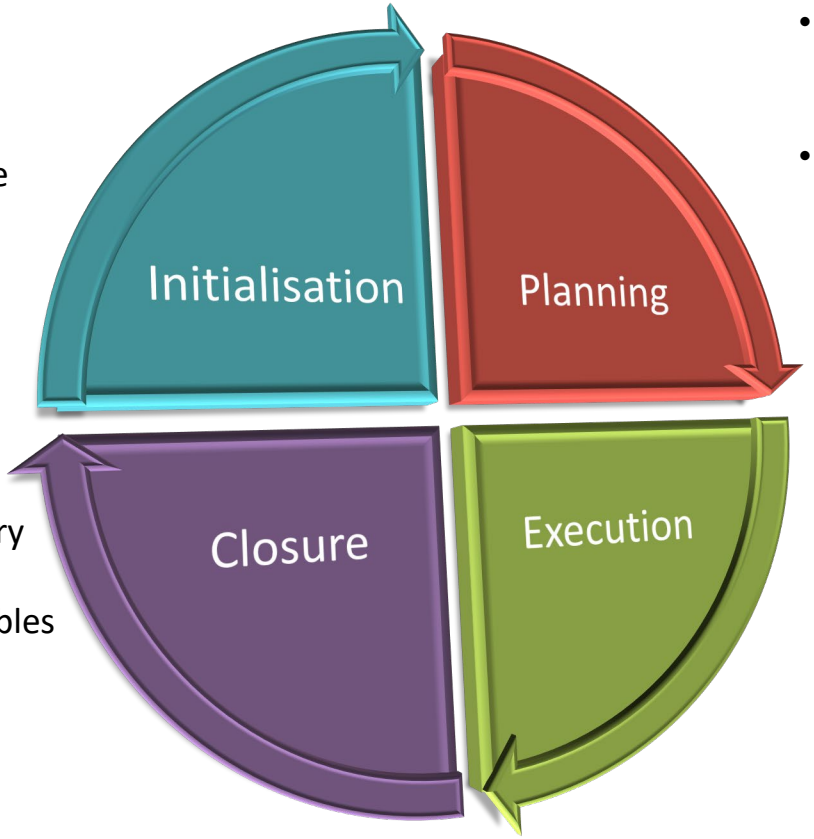
Project Life Cycle



Project Life Cycle

- Motivation & Goal
  - Industry Need
  - Cross-Discipline Usage
- Project Definition
  - Broader Problem
  - Specific Task Focus



- Alignment of Tasks & Disciplines
  - Unusual Data Type
  - Scale of Dataset
- Higher Risk of Timeline
  - Unexpected Delay of Collecting Data
  - Misunderstanding of the concepts

- Technical Analysis & Industry Meaningful
- Diverse Version of Deliverables for Different Communities

- Deliverable-Focus Methodology
- Terminology Gaps
- Evaluation Metrics Difference
- Explanation of Results

Example Progression

Do	Do Not
Engage audience with eye contact and questions	Read slides word-for-word with no interaction
Use clear diagrams and structured explanations	Overload slides with jargon and small text
Speak with steady pace and confidence	Rush through material or mumble
Adapt explanations based on audience reactions	Ignore audience questions or feedback
Summarize key points at the end	End abruptly without summarizing message

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Q&A

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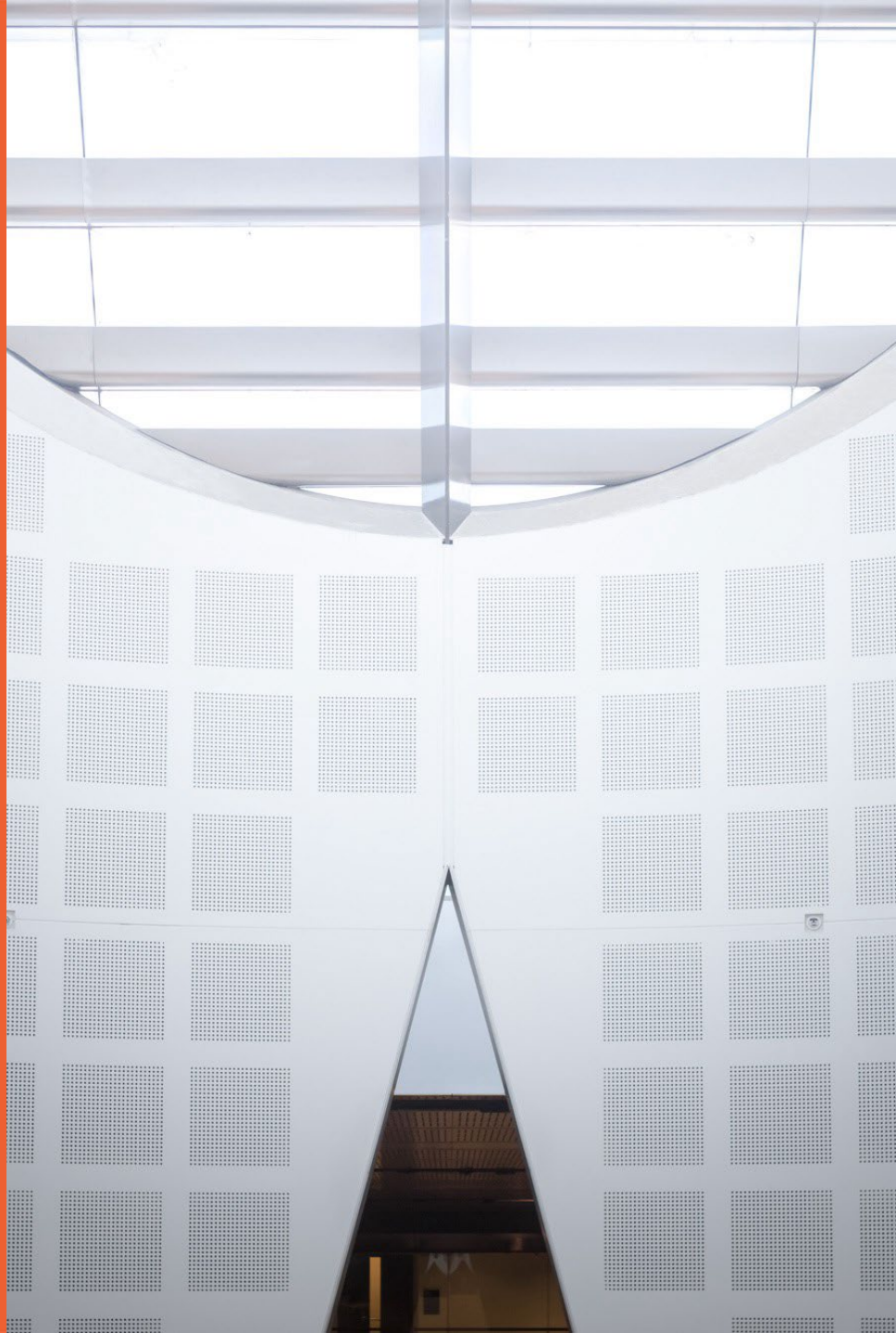

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Thank you!

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