

Technical Demos and Presentations 101

JULY 8, 2021

Technical Presentation Outline

- A technical presentation can contain a lot of different elements, but here are some common parts:
 1. A problem statement
 2. An overview of the solution
 3. A demo
- Depending on context and/or the audience, the presentation may also contain the following:
 - Design details
 - A comparison of alternative solutions
 - Key lessons learned
 - Future extensions of the project

Audience

- Audience might be one of the most overlooked components of a presentation (or really any form of communication)
- If the audience is non-technical, you want to:
 - Use less jargon and clearly define all acronyms
 - Be less detailed in your explanations of the solution
 - Display architecture diagrams at a higher level
 - Make sure the demo is straightforward and user-friendly
- Before you give a presentation (or write a paper, email, etc), **make sure you know your audience!**

Presentation Tips

1. Have your presentation and demo queued up so that when it's your turn, you don't have to find your files first.
2. Make sure all presenters introduce themselves at the beginning (if everyone in the room doesn't already know each other) and ensure all presenter names are on the title slide
3. You might be able to reuse content from your proposal or project plan in your slides
4. Slides should not be cluttered. Use minimal text and make sure all figures are easy to read.
 - Explain figures very clearly. You've had a lot more time to understand the figure than your audience, so walk them through the key information.
 - If you aren't sure if the font is big enough, try to keep it above 30.
5. Put your names and a prompt for questions on the last slide.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

- Practice out loud. Maybe practice in front of a mirror.
 - Try recording your presentation and watching it. This isn't fun for most people, but it's the easiest way to hear if you are talking too fast or fumbling over parts of your presentation.
- Know your part really well.
 - You should know what the next slide is about before you see it.
 - You don't have to memorize a speech, but practice it enough that you know what you're going to say.
- Speak loudly and confidently with intonation and enthusiasm
- Practice with your team
 - All team members should know which parts they will speak to
 - Smooth out your transitions
 - Try not to say "Next slide"
 - Unmute yourself as the current presenter is finishing so that there's no awkward pause
 - You should know how long the total presentation is so you can finish it within your given timeframe

Demo

1. Make sure you have thoroughly tested your demo
 - If new code is committed to the repo, you need to retest your demo, even if it was a “harmless” commit
 - Plan for contingencies (i.e. what if the database server is down?)
2. Your demo does **not** need to cover every aspect of your project.
 - Pick the biggest 1 or 2 pieces of functionality you want to show off and do it from the user’s perspective
3. Make your project look easy to use
 - If you are entering info unprompted or the output is hard to comprehend, fix it before the demo
4. Have your demo ready to go in another tab – and test it right before presenting. Do not waste presentation time trying to find or open your project.

Why is this important?

- Presentations are an opportunity for you to promote yourself (or your team) and your work
- Presentations are a means for getting support (maybe money!) for your ideas/work
- It's not always about what or how much you know or how great your idea/work is → A killer presentation can cover up weaknesses and draw people in

Today's Activity

- There's no required activity for this module but you may want to use the time to prepare your presentation.
- You could “pair program” your slides or you could divide and conquer. Choose what works best for you at this time.



**I MOUSTACHE YOU A
QUESTION**

**BUT I'M SHAVING IT FOR
LATER**

Seen on: FoDrizzle.co

Questions?

Presentations on 7/9

Audience:

- Technical peers

Timeframe:

- 8 mins for presentation
- 2 mins for questions