DSA3101 (AY2122s2 Week 12): Making presentations

Tailoring Content

Three possible target audience:

Project Sponsor

- The group/person who champions the project. They represent the business interest.
- Usually, the sponsor is higher management, so they are the ones who decide if the project has been a success or not.
- Keep them informed and updated on plans, progress (success/failures).
- Communicate and clarify the project goals with them.

To tailor content for project sponsor:

- Summarise project and goals
- State results
- Provide evidence
- Discuss recommendations, limitations, and next steps. The recommendations should be from the business side - e.g. do we need more data, different expertise, implementation approach, etc.

Client

- Client is much more operational/hands-on than the sponsor.
- They are the ones who will use the model on a daily basis. They are not necessarily data-trained or have strong math background.
- It is important to build a good long-term relationship with the client.
- Take great pains to understand their needs, frustrations and way of working.

To tailor content for the client:

- Summarise project and goals
- Relate the model to their current and new/proposed work-flow.
- Demonstrate usage and benefits of the model.

Fellow Data Scientist

- The data scientist is the person who would be interested in *all* the work you did, no one else.

To tailor content for your peers:

- Introduce the problem,
- Discuss related work (literature review)
- Present your work, and findings; compare it to existing methods/work.
- Discuss limitations and future work.

Purpose of Presentation

It is also important to consider the purpose of the meeting/presentation. This affects the tone, content and length:

- Is the purpose to get stakeholder buy-in?

- – At the beginning of a project?
  - – At the end of a project?
- Is the purpose to get comments/ideas/feedback from the client/sponsor/data scientist?
- Is it a weekly update meeting?

Duration of presentation

- For a 1-hour meeting, don't plan to fill up the time entirely. Keep things short and concise to leave time for discussion and feedback.
- Use the spare time to develop your relationships within the company.

What makes a good presentation?

Good presentations usually have excellent

- Content
- Passionate speakers
- Keen sense of the audience

To study/improve, watch other's in terms of * speech * structure * visual aids, and * delivery

Visual Aids

Experiment with Different Formats

- Don't be restricted to PowerPoint/KeyNote
- For our type of content, markdown/html can be very useful.
- Capitalise on the format you have.

Keeping your composure

Before a presentation

- Prepare the presentation; know it well.
- Anticipate questions; get a sounding board. You could even sound out the client before a big meeting.
- Preparation includes being ready to skip material if you are running out of time.
- If you are one to get nervous before presentations, get to know yourself.

During a presentation

- If questions are asked, don't get defensive/personal. Stay calm.
- Clarify the question and answer honestly.

After a presentation

- Reflect on what went well and what did not.
- Think of ways you could have improved.

References

1. Practical Data Science with R, Nina Zumel and John Mount
2. The Craft of Scientific Presentations