

How to give a talk (that doesn't put your audience to sleep)

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Overview Slide

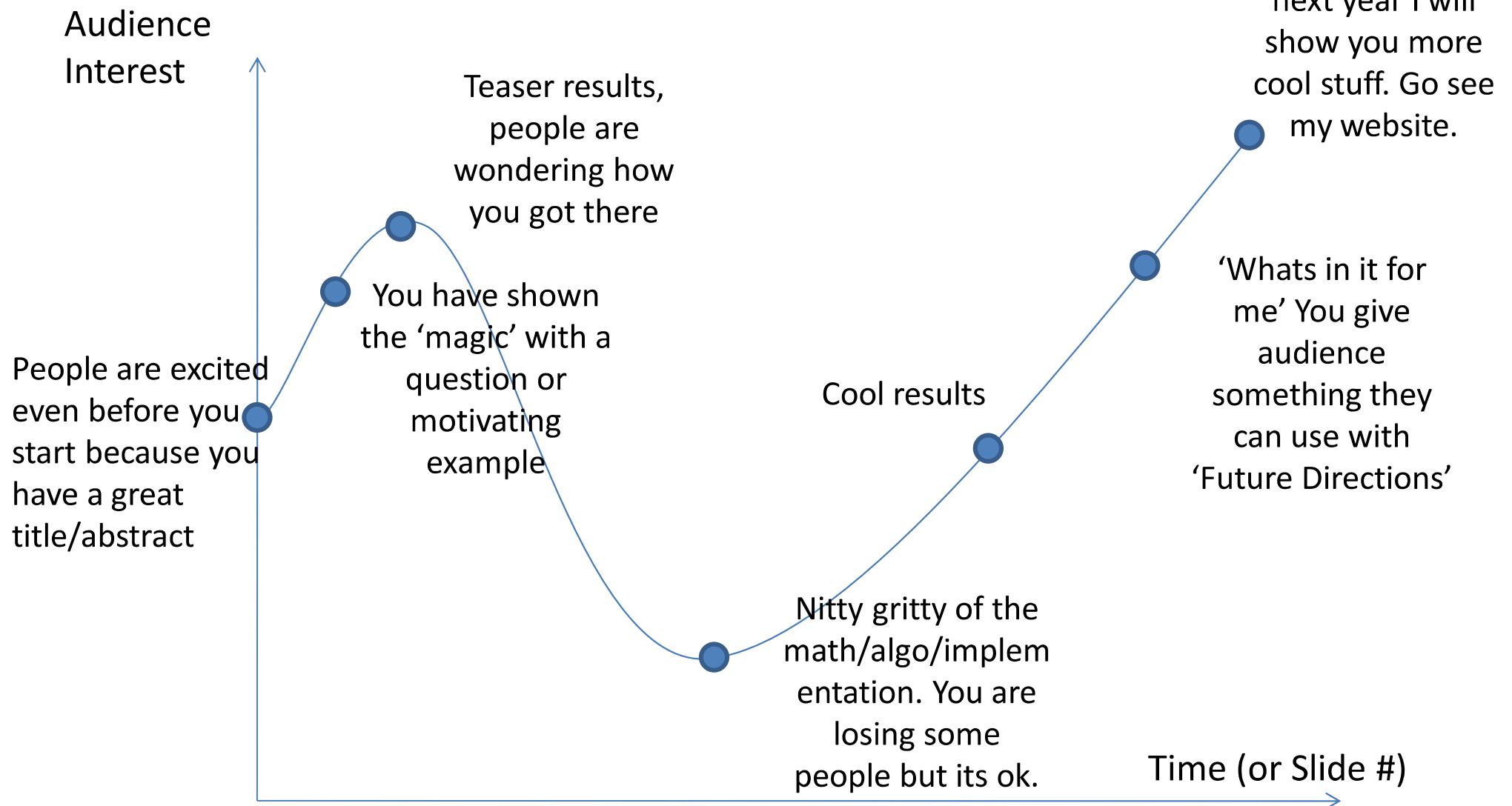
- I will start with a statement that is too general
- Mention terms I haven't explained yet
- I will talk about related work about topic you don't know yet
- Tell you more about things you have no idea
- I will show you results after you have already lost me
- I will conclude with conclusion

Getting Started

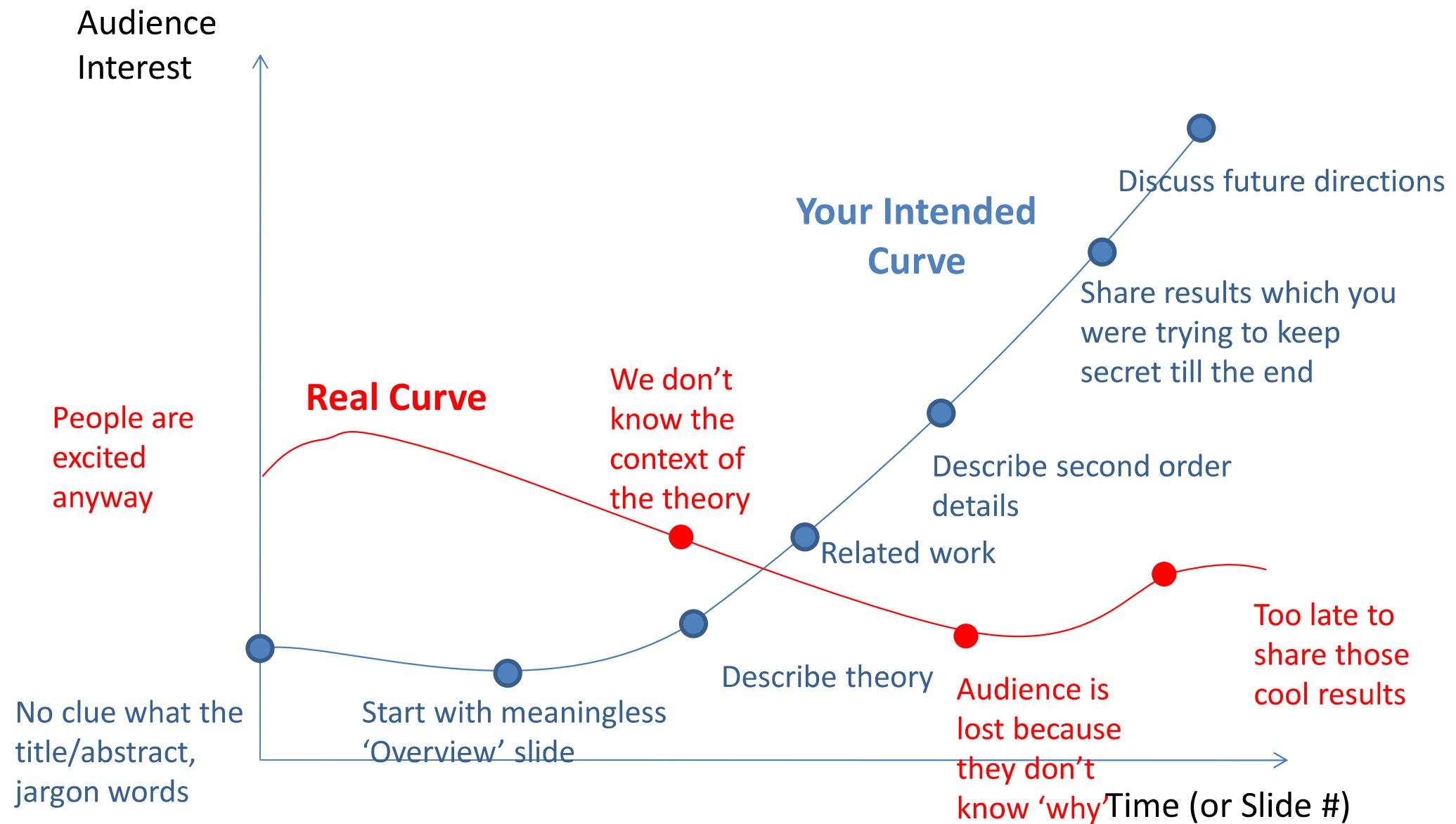
- Don't start with an OVERVIEW slide
- Start with a question or motivating example
- Give the zeroth order idea in one sentence
- Show the 'magic'
 - Conclusion goes first !
 - Make the audience wonder how you will get there
 - then on the next 2 slides after magic trick
- Gauge your audience and adapt. If you're not good at gauging, just stick with your original presentation plan.



Curve of Excitement



Curve of Boredome



The S curve of excitement

- The flipped S-curve of audience excitement vs. time line of your presentation. –
- First few units on the time scale should have content that causes maximum excitement.
- Then audience excitement level goes down as you get into details and explanations. It stays a constant low for the duration of your explanation
- The ending should be 'wow' again.
- In essence, the audience is really listening to you only at the beginning (and bit at the end) unless you engage them in an interactive activity or have a unusual happening in the middle.

Motivation

Motivate the context or application

Why is what you are doing important? Why should people care? This could be audience background based

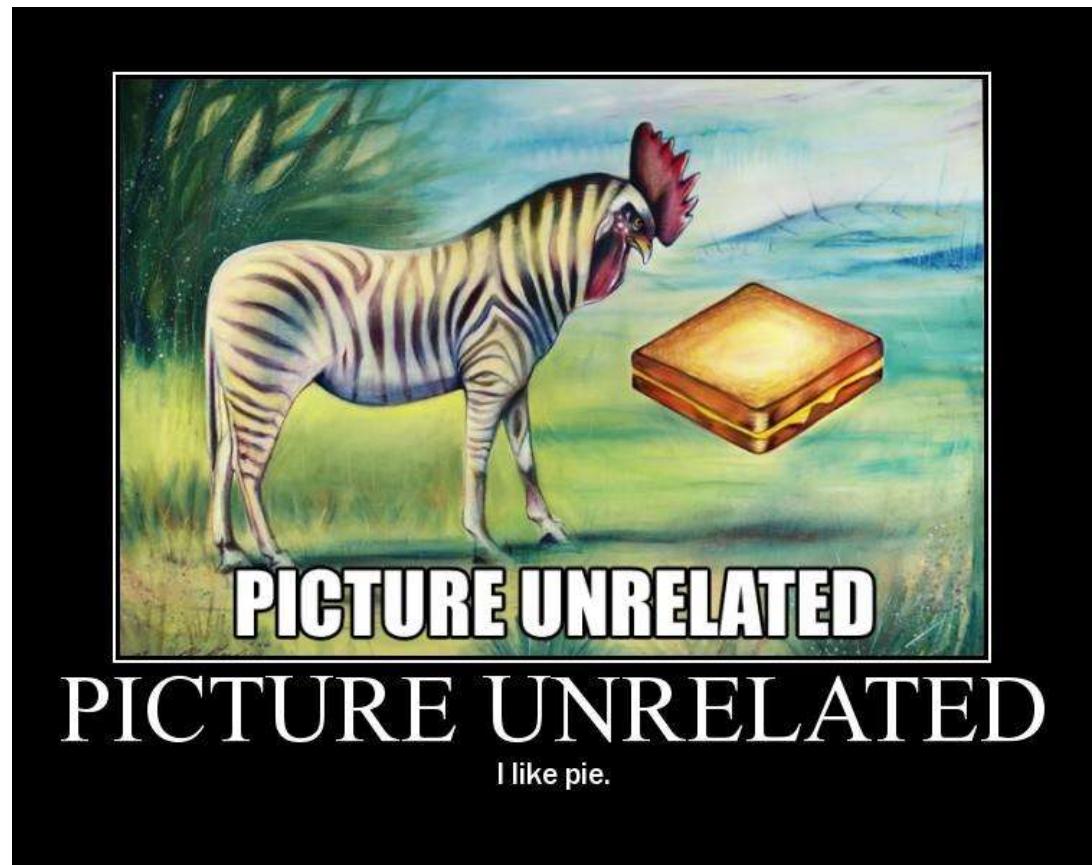
Setting up the problem/approach

- Overview diagram of the project should be at the beginning and not at the end.

Blank slides force people to focus on the speaker. You could also hit 'B' in Microsoft power point to make the screen go blank. 'B' again to show your presentation.

If you are digressing from the slide, audience may get confused by what is on your slide. Hit 'B'.

- Have a photo/figure/sketch on every slide
- The image can be unrelated
- If you run out of ideas for a photo on each slide, just search for the keyword online (here I searched ‘unrelated;’)



Last Slide

- Never end with a ‘Thank you’ slide !
 - This is the slide that will be up for a long time during Q&A
 - Last slide should be
 - Summary of your talk
 - Website for further info
 - State problem. State conclusion. Contact info. Nice pictures
 - Don’t end with Acknowledgement slide
 - Appreciated but not useful to most of your audience
 - Ack slide can be one before ‘Summary’
 - How to encourage questions in Q&A
 - This slides should have take home points and conclusions
 - State some open questions at the end of the last slide.

Thank you Slide

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