Presenting Your Research

Grad Success Week
May 7, 2019

Presenter: Jennifer Parsons
Student Success Centre
Preparation and Mindset
Consider....

• What do you like in presentation? What works?

• What do you dislike in a presentation? What doesn’t work?
Make a strong start

• Enthusiasm!
• Eye contact, connection
• Expression
• Preparation
How you might prepare

• Talking about your subject to others
• Practicing before a small audience
• Developing small sections
• Recording/video of yourself
• Anticipating questions
• Making up answer slides or handouts
No Apologies or Excuses

I didn’t have time to..... technical difficulties....
Sorry........ graph not clear..... not qualified...
...I’m sorry.... poor English..... we don’t have time
..... my first presentation ........ soooo nervous
.... my supervisor could explain.... I’m not good at....
don’t know what I meant there.... sick today.... too long.... not going to finish.... this....
It’s normal to feel nervous

• Mindset
• Physical symptoms
• Strategies
Before You Present

Think about....

• Audience
• Time
• Location
• Genre
• Message
Consider your language

• Use academic words (see e.g. Academic Word List, Manchester Phrase Bank)
• Avoid colloquialisms, vulgarity, contractions, abbreviations
• Be precise
Language issues

• Practice new vocabulary
• Check pronunciation
• Speak slowly and clearly

• Use slides that SHOW your points
• Minimal text, key words and ideas clarified

• Practice, practice, practice!
Do you need an outline slide?

If yes,

......then how will you present it?
Signposting

SO THAT WAS THE METHOD; NOW WE CAN MOVE ON TO THE RESULTS....

I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE

.....

PLEASE NOTICE HOW THIS DIFFERS......
Death by PowerPoint
Audience attention is not consistent
Use a home slide

Go back to key data
Remind the audience of its importance or relevance here
Discuss the next points you are going to make about it
Structure
These should NOT be on slides:

• Related work
• Complete citations on each slide (except images)
• Complex technical details
For discussion

There are four important points the presenter would like to highlight, so she puts them on one slide in a numbered list. She adds three or four subpoints and examples under each main idea. The slide is quite crowded.

The audience reads ahead while she is talking, and several audience members ask questions about Point #4 before the presenter has finished talking about Point #2.

How could these issues have been avoided?
Working Memory: How many items on each slide?
ONE message per slide
Six item maximum
But use common sense....
How to keep the audience’s attention

Keep it simple

Ask key questions

Employ contrast

Organize in logical blocks
Follow a clear and simple structure

**Beginning**
Tell them what you are going to tell them

**Middle**
Tell them

**End**
Tell them what you told them
The Academic Narrative

- Review context: existing situation, key players
- Explain complications/problems
- Address the problems
- Explain how your solution is transformative
Lead with examples

• Provide context
• Give a specific example or two
• Generalize from the specific
• Go back to specifics and substance
Additional ways to sustain interest

Videos, images, props
Case studies, anecdotes
Real stories, own experience, news items
Audience participation

Is this picture a good choice or a poor choice?
The take-home message

Just ONE big idea
Contrast is engaging

What is” versus “what could be…”

Analytical versus emotional appeal

Positive versus negative outcomes

Traditional versus non-traditional approaches
Points to Consider

1. What is the difference between ‘what is / what could be’ in my research area?

2. What areas in my research might listeners find surprising versus what areas might appeal to common knowledge?

3. What areas in my research might connect to the audiences’ emotions, values, or real world knowledge? How can I extend that to examples/data from my research?
After presenting his research findings, the speaker concludes with one slide with bulleted lists of both positive and negative outcomes. He begins by focusing on the positive, but the audience is clearly reading the negative list. There are murmurs of concern and argument from a number of people. The presenter feels he is losing control of his point in showing this slide.

How could he have avoided this situation?

What should he do now that his audience is responding in this way?
Organizing Content
Purposes of an Oral Research Presentation

- Share findings and analysis
- Explain importance and direction
- Benefit from questions and feedback
Common Components of a Research Presentation

**Beginning**
- Introduction
- Research Question(s)
- Research Methods

**Middle**
- Findings
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Future Research

**End**
- References
- Acknowledgements
- Questions from the Audience
Reducing a Conference Paper

• 20 minute talk - 2000 words
• Modify publication version
• One theoretical idea

Organizing

• Begin with clearly stated thesis
• Break into small sections
• Explain what you are doing
• Use visuals

Engaging

• Smile often
• Make side comments
• Anticipate and encourage questions
• Leave conclusions/directions open
Introduction

- Relevant background/context for your research
- Importance of the research
- Overview of the presentation
Background/Literature Review

Humanities /Social Science

- Texts/relevant articles used in your research
- Authors: contribution to your work
- Images: book covers, historical photos

Physical Sciences

- Relevant studies: influence on your research
- How your research differs from or builds on these
Research Question (s)/Thesis statement

Thesis statement
• positional statement

Research Question
• 1-2 sentences: may be a statement
• May address 1-7 related questions
• Open-ended
Research Methods

• How data was collected and analyzed
• Visual slide may be helpful: e.g., process, equipment, field study

• Do you need a slide at all?
• Do you need more than one slide for clarity?
The presenters are explaining a complex new process. Each step is on a separate slide and they move from one to another without summarizing or recapping the previous steps. Audience members repeatedly ask the presenters to go back a few slides as they realize they are confused or have forgotten the preceding information.

**What might have helped the audience to follow the process?**

**How can the presenters deal with the situation now?**
Findings/Data

• Organize clearly
• Use visuals: charts, graphs, images, primary text
• Explain the data
• Save analysis and discussion for the next section
Discussion/Conclusions

• Summary of key findings
• Further analysis and discussion of previously shown data
• Answer to research question
• OR next steps to answer the question
Future Research

• Your research goals
• How these contribute to larger body of research
• How they could be achieved
Address the significance or impact of your research:

- Why does this research matter?
- What are the consequences of doing it or not doing it?
- Who is likely to be interested in utilizing your findings (e.g. policy-makers, industry, NGOs etc.)
References

• Partial list: 3-6 key references
• Format for style (e.g. IEEE, APA, Chicago etc.)
References


Acknowledgements

• Relevant people: supervisor, colleagues
• Programs: opportunities
• Agencies: funding

• Academic supports only
Preparing for the End

• Be ready to discuss related work
• Be positive about contributors to your field
• Anticipate questions
Using Visuals Effectively
• TREBUCHET
• CALIBRI

• COURIER
• HELVETICA
• TIMES NEW ROMAN
Surviving Graduate School: The Role of Resilience

A research proposal for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology

Department of Psychology
University of Calgary

Presenter: Anais Quon, B.A.
Graduate Supervisor: Dr. J. Perry
Data slides

• Clear
• Comprehensible
• Small area of data
• Show the audience your key point
• Explain the importance of the image/figure
Think universal design

• Is your content accessible?
  • Visually
  • Audibly
  • By a diverse audience
  • After the presentation
There are at least **7,102** living languages in the world.

- **2,301** are in Asia
- **2,138** in Africa
- **1,313** in the Pacific
- **1,064** in the Americas

Europe has the least, with **286**

Sources: Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Eighteenth edition  THE WASHINGTON POST
Of the 7.2 billion people on Earth...

...nearly two-thirds speak one of these 12 languages as their native language.

- Arabic: 467M
- Hindi-Urdu: 588M
- Chinese (all dialects): 1.39 billion speakers
- English: 527M
- Bengali: 250M
- Portuguese: 193M
- Italian: 67M
- German: 132M
- Japanese: 123M
- French: 118M
- Russian: 254M

Sources: Ulrich Ammon, University of Düsseldorf, Population Reference Bureau
Note: Totals for languages include bilingual speakers.
THE WASHINGTON POST
English is by far the most common studied foreign language in the world.

- **French**: 82M
- **Chinese**: 30M
- **Spanish**: 14.5M
- **German**: 14.5M
- **Italian**: 8M
- **Japanese**: 3M

1.5 billion learners

Sources: Ulrich Ammon, University of Düsseldorf  THE WASHINGTON POST
Building Diagrams

• Build by components (aim for <8)
• Make symmetrical (doubles visual retention)
• Animation to connect
Graphs

- Avoid unnecessary values, axes, scales etc.
- Label clearly
- Usually the trend is most important

![Graph showing the number of cases over age of patients with a peak at age 50.]
"While the amygdala can signal to activate [certain chemicals] in response to stressful or threatening events, the hippocampus plays an important role in feedback inhibition and works to return the system to homeostasis (Lupien et al., 2009). Abnormal activation of this system is a common hallmark for disorders including depression and PTSD."

"[Neuro-imaging] research of individuals with PTSD consistently reports anatomical abnormalities in the... [amygdala], including reductions in grey matter volume."

References
Terminology

• Introduce specialized terminology as it occurs
• Show it on the slide
• If it is not common knowledge, define it more than once
• Make sure it is necessary
The Amygdala is responsible for memories and emotions

Trauma exposure might impair the ability to down-regulate negative emotion.

Abnormal activation indicates depression and PTSD.

Abnormal activation indicates depression and PTSD
Math

• Very small doses!
• 4-7 symbols at a time
• ONE simple equation per slide
• Animated changes

\[ \frac{d}{dx} (f(x) \cdot g(x)) = \]

www.mathwarehouse.com/gifs
Fourier series of the motion:
- **blue arrow**: ordinary (linear) susceptibility
- **the green arrow**: second-harmonic generation
- **red arrow**: optical rectification.

But because the electron is in an anharmonic potential (**black curve**), the electron motion is not sinusoidal.
Consider...

A slide includes a pie chart, a diagram, a table, and a list of terms.

What problems do you foresee for the presenter and the audience?

SOLUTIONS
Audience Questions and Feedback
When to take questions

During or after the presentation?

- Advantages?
- Disadvantages?
Make a summary slide for question period

Examples:

• Diagram or flow chart of ideas
• Summary of key points
• Reminder of research problem and solution
**Answering Questions**

- What if ....
  - You don’t understand the question?
  - You can’t answer the question?

- **Anticipate questions**
  - Check your understanding
  - Ask for clarification
  - Use props
  - Share what you know
  - Relate it to your research
Adding clarity and interest after your talk

Can your audience easily access resources from your presentation?

  E.g. web-based materials, slide decks, infographics etc.
References


[https://www.ibiology.org/professional...](https://www.ibiology.org/professional...)