

ORAL PRESENTATION TIPS

Speaking offers you the opportunity to present an idea or concept, but lecturing to large audiences requires skill & planning.

Here are some simple guidelines:

1. Observe deadlines from the CMR office.
2. Make sure you disclose any and all *real or potential conflicts of interest* you have relative to the subject before beginning your presentation. Include in your first slide.
3. Keep your audience in mind as you prepare and deliver your presentation.
4. Identify the objectives of your presentation at the beginning.
5. Make sure you are comfortable with the equipment you will be using: microphone, computer, laser pointer.
6. Place the microphone properly. If you can't be heard, the audience cannot learn what you have come to teach!
7. Face the audience, not the slides or graphics you are showing.
8. Do not read your presentation *verbatim* from your notes or slides.
9. Use the laser pointer judiciously.
10. Repeat or re-phrase questions before answering during a Q&A session. This involves the entire audience in the process, not just you and the questioner.
11. Try to establish eye contact with members of your audience in various areas of the room.

Graphic Design Tips:

Graphics can enhance your lecture, helping *you* maintain audience interest, and helping *the audience* remember important points. Do not design graphics to serve as your lecture notes.

When presenting in a large meeting room or ballroom, design your graphics so they are legible to the person in the last row.

Make sure that the information on your graphs, tables or figures matches your text on the slide

Practice, practice, practice! Public speaking is an art. If you think you are speaking slowly, speak more slowly! Prepare a concise presentation that fits within the allotted timeframe without rushing.

Good Slide Design

- Two simple slides are better than one complex slide.
- Two (2) facts per slide -
Plan for one slide per every one to two minutes.
- Standard Design:
Six lines of text per slide (or fewer)
- Be selective with graphics, they should support, not detract from your information.

Color:

Use basic colors with high contrast between your background and text colors. Dark blues or greens with white text are recommended (yellow title). Do not use more than three colors on a single slide, if possible. When choosing text color, avoid pastels, which cannot be seen by color-impaired audience members, and red, which does not project well. Highlight sparingly, using bright yellow.

Font and Font Size:

For lecturing in a large room, a title font size of 40 or 44 point and a main text font size of 24 - 36 point work best; 18 point text may be legible, but only with difficulty.

We recommend using a sans serif font for your slides (examples: Arial, Tahoma, Verdana). Avoid using **bold** and *italics*. Simple is better.

Graphs and Charts:

Remember - using material from a publication may violate copyright laws unless the publisher grants permission or you are the original author.

Create your own graphs and charts.

For slides with a two-column table, the maximum number of rows should not exceed five; for a three-column table, the maximum number of rows should be three.

Scientific Abstract / Vignette Presentations, suggested format:

- Scientific Abstract. Title, Authors and Affiliations (1 slide), Introduction and Objectives (1-3 slides), Methods (2-4 slides), Results (2-4 slides), Strengths and Limitations (1 slide), Conclusions (1 slide).
- Clinical Vignette. Introduction and Learning Objectives (1—2 slides), Case Description (2—4 slides), Discussion (2—4 slides), Learning / Take Home Points (1 slide).

Modified from SGIM (<http://www.sgim.org/am07/OralPresentationTips.pdf>)

Recommendations for Oral Presentations

Area	Do's	Don'ts
Content		
Key concept	1 Clearly define few concepts, learning objectives, or important points	1 Overwhelm the audience
Relevance	2 Make it relevant, plan according to audience background/ interest/ skill	2 Ignore the skill level of the audience
Other	3 Review with colleague/ mentor, organize, repeat, mention limitations, follow a structure	3 Be disorganized
Slides		
Clarity	4 Create understandable and clear slides, use bullets and a simple layout	4 Include complex/ excessive information, use paragraphs
Graphics	5 Use pictures, simple graphs or diagrams	5 Use small or complex pictures/ graphs/ tables from publications
Text / font	6 Use short sentences and few words (7 words/row, limit 40/ slide), readable font (>20 points, light text, Sans Serif-Arial), check spelling	6 Use small font or dark text on dark background, include excessive number of words, have typos
Background	7 Use a dark and simple background	7 Use many colors or complex background
Other	8 Review with colleague/ mentor, use few slides (10-14/ 10 min talk)	8 Animate excessively, create too many slides
Presentation		
Clarity	9 Use clear voice, articulate,	9 Use jargon/ difficult to pronounce words
Pace	10 Speak slowly, remain within allowed time, pause	10 Speak too fast, exceed allowed time
Voice	11 Use strong and varying tone of voice, speak to microphone	11 Be soft/ monotonous
	12 Show interest/ enthusiasm/ excitement, market your findings	12 Ignore your audience
Engagement	13 Repeat question, answer briefly, limit answer to question asked	13 Spend too long answering, focus on one person
Questions	14 Maintain eye contact with the audience	14 Read slides, look at screen excessively
Eye contact	15 Practice, be relaxed, be concordant between slides and talk	15 Show notes to the audience, use inappropriate/ excessive humor, pace, use mannerisms
Other		

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Other Resources

- Browner WS. Publishing and presenting clinical research. Williams and Wilkins, 1999. Chapter 12.
- "Speak like a Pro: How to improve your Lectures", <http://www.sgim.org/prospeak.cfm> (workshop handout, useful references).
- Swarthmore College. <http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurrrin1/powerpointadvice.htm>