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“How to present scientific work”

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNYM1Bi-gxI
Presenting Yourself

• A conference talk is a chance to get your name and research in front of lots of people who would not otherwise read your paper.

• Among conference delegates or visitors you may find people who can help you with your research, PhD examiners, etc.; you want them to see you as professional, interesting and interested in the research of others.

• Be prepared to talk to people you don’t know, often without anyone introducing you.

• People who speak well are considered smart and vice versa.

• Don't need natural talent to be a good speaker.
Preparing the Presentation

• You will not be able to cover everything that is in your paper
• Focus on
  • the aspect you are particularly proud of
  • an argument you want to make
  • what the audience is likely to be most interested in
  • the area where you are seeking advice from the audience
• Spend enough time preparing
• Rehearse in front of a friendly audience
• Cut down to tell a tight story
• Memorize the key points you are trying to leave with the audience
Why do you present

• The purpose of a presentation is NOT
  • to convince the audience that you are the coolest guy ever
  • to tell everything you know about a topic
  • to present all technical details
• Rather you want to
  • present the audience your idea
  • make the audience keen about reading your work
  • engage, tease, provoke the audience
The audience you want...

- knows your work
- explains all details of your important theory of complex varieties of high dimensionality
- is keen on learning about the newest developments in your area
- pays attention, is constructive, and favourable
The audience you get…

• does not know you
• probably heard about your theory but damns it to hell
• just came back from lunch ("Schnitzelkoma")
• thinks their emails are much more important
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Wake up the audience!

You have about 2 minutes to catch the audience before they nap away!
If you can convey only one message to the audience - which one should it be?
What to put on the Slides
What to put on the Slides

• Don’t use too much text
• Put a picture on every slide
• Demos in your talk are awesome
• Honest charts
• Videos
• Subtle animation
Software Demonstrations

• Make sure that your software runs exactly as you expect on the machine designated for the demonstrations
  • software may require particular plugins or a particular version of a database
  • computer technicians may have upgraded the machine
• Have everything open and running before the audience arrives
• If your software malfunctions, do not swear - nor spend the next 10 minutes inspecting the source code for a bug
Doing the Presentation

- Speak energetically but clearly and slowly enough to articulate
- Do not read out the slides
- Neither look at your notes nor at the screen all the time
- Tell’em what you are going to tell’em, tell ’em, and tell ’em what you told ’em
- Ask for understanding at key points
- Project and emphasise
- Use your eyes, body and hands
- Show your passion
- Good posture; balance
- If you are one of the speakers in a session, stay for the whole session
What to Say

• Motivate problem with a practical scenario
• Before explaining the technology
  • Why is this an important problem? (Audience will be distracted by guessing otherwise.)
  • Why is your solution better?
• The technology
  • Goal is to convince you've got something great ...
  • ... not to teach them how to implement it
  • Success if you get them to read the paper for details
• Shorter is better
• Don't irritate your audience
• Stories get attention
How to Say it Well

• Practice your talk
  • More than once
  • Time yourself

• Compensate for distractions/inattention
  • Restate overall goals from time to time, e.g. "Remember that we're trying to compute these probabilities on the map."
  • Repetition is OK
  • Repetition is OK

• Eye Contact: always face the audience
  • don't look or point at screen
  • glance at laptop, use the mouse

• Always be prepared to skip ahead (bridging slides!)
What you can skip

• **Agenda / Outline**
  • conveys almost no information at the outset of the talk
  • potentially *after* the motivation
  • maybe to sync during the presentation

• **Related Work**
  • are part of the paper
  • you should be aware of related work
  • talk about related work in a constructive way

• **Technical details / Formulas**
  • don't try to tell your story with equations
  • a few equations are ok, but not gratuitous
  • flash up some math just to show you have it
End of your presentation

• End on a memorable slide
  • people should remember the end of your talk
  • it should be worthwhile to remember
  • be short and concise
• Indicate when you're done, e.g. "That's the end. Thanks for listening."
• Let session chair ask for questions
Rude Q & A

- Repeat the question to buy time
- If multiple questions, answer the last one and ask what the first one was again
- Ask for clarification of the question
- Ask a question instead of answering
- If too long an answer… “that’s interesting - let’s talk offline”
- Be calm, humble - but prepared for anything
More sources

- https://chi2016.acm.org/wp/example-presentations/