ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

*how to make the most of 15 minutes!*

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Reference - Ch. 4 of:

[Image of Communicating Science book]

http://www.worldscientific.com/worldscibooks/10.1142/10145

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World Scientific
THE SHORT LECTURE

• The CHALLENGE:

Allotted very short time
(~15 minutes at conference,
40 minutes for department seminar)

to present several years work!
OBJECTIVE OF LECTURES AND POSTERS

• TRANSMIT INFORMATION
  – Share with the world the findings of your research

• IMPRESS THE AUDIENCE
  – with the quality of the research
  – with the quality of the researcher
  – and of the researcher’s institution
Multi-media, Multi-channel Communications

Noise in any channel increases errors!
Objective of this lecture:

• To give you methods and guidelines for presenting good lectures and posters
Outline

1. Lecture Preparation
2. Lecture Presentation
3. Posters
4. Conference Conduct
PREPARATION

- Carefully choose material, **according to time available**
- Prepare graphics
- Rehearse / time presentation (including in front of colleagues!)
- Cut the excess material so you stay on time!
LECTURE STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 10-20% of time allotted
- Bring audience up to speed (depends on audience!) – explain the overall subject matter
- Tell them what to expect (tell them what you are going to tell them!)
LECTURE STRUCTURE
continued

2. BODY
   • Abbreviate methodology, unless novel
   • Concentrate on results, and their significance

3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
   • Recap what you told them
   • Focus on 3 points you would like the audience to remember!
MOST COMMON PROBLEMS

- Too much material.
- Too much detail.
- Illegible graphics (too crowded, too small, too much detail)
- Insufficient rehearsal
- Poor delivery technique:
  - Verbal (talk too fast, drop tone of voice, etc.)
  - Visual (fumbling with slides, occlude projector, laser dazzle, back to audience)
GRAPHICS

- Always display something when you speak.
- Rule of thumb -- ~ 1 slide per minute
- Insure that everything can be read and understood at back of room
- Minimum font – 14 points. Title - 48 point
- Use color and effects, but sparingly – e.g. for different curves on graph, parts of apparatus
- Text slides – Key words only, no complete sentences
- Graphics – always point out and explain what you want the audience to see (blind man’s rule)
GRAPHICS continued

- Use slide presentation program
  - e.g. MS Power Point
  - Use their default layouts, formatting, and font sizes – insures proper spacing.
- Don’t crowd your slides – leave space between items
- No work-shop drawings
- No slides of only equations
- Never photocopy from books without magnification and emphasis
- Title each slide
- Number your slides (small font, in corner)
- Last slide – interesting graphic or summary
  - Not just “thank you”.

Short Lecture 13
Submerged Arc Water Treatment

- Kills bacteria
- Decomposes organic compounds
- Potential Applications:
  - Hospital effluents
  - Waste water treatment
  - Drinking water treatment

Sample Lecture Graphic Slide

Slide title. 44 pt, dark color

White background

Etalon Transmission vs L

Figure – Graph
Enlarge to fill as much of slide as possible (even at expense of logo and page number)
Head’s up display

Contrasting dark colors for different curves
All symbols sufficiently large (minimum 14 pt)
PRESENTATION

• REHEARSE! REHEARSE! REHEARSE!
  • In front of colleagues – get their feedback
  • Use stop watch – check your timing
  • If you are over time – don’t talk fast! Cut material

• Business attire
  • men: suit and tie
  • women: conservative but feminine
• Load file/connect computer before session begins
• Use the mouse for pointing:
  • Suggestion – keep cursor visible
    • Right click – pointer options – arrow options - visible
  • Laser pointers are annoying
    • Dancing, flickering dot
    • Back to audience
    • Don’t use them!
## Cursor vs Laser Pointer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Laser Pointer</th>
<th>Cursor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eye contact</strong></td>
<td>Presenter must turn away from the audience, cannot keep eye contact.</td>
<td>Presenter always faces audience – glances down at lectern computer screen when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steadiness</td>
<td>Laser beam constantly darting around – distracting</td>
<td>Cursor can be placed accurately and steadily on the desired feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speckle</td>
<td>Together with darting about, laser speckle is annoying and distracting</td>
<td>No speckle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple screens in large auditorium</td>
<td>Speaker can only point at one screen at a time with laser pointer. Participants far from that screen are disadvantaged</td>
<td>Cursor is simultaneously projected on all of the screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Pointer can “walk away”</td>
<td>Mouse or other pointing device always connected to computer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Short Lecture**
PRESENTATION continued

- Speak to audience, don’t read your lecture!
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Use simple words
- Maintain eye contact with audience
- Point to relevant items on graphics
- Don’t drop your voice at the end of sentences
VOICE CONTROL: end of declarative sentence “.”

- Maintain amplitude
- Drop pitch
VOICE CONTROL: end of interrogative sentence “?”

- Maintain amplitude
- Raise pitch
THE POSTER

– USE

• Backdrop for one-on-one conversations with truly interested colleagues
• Walk-by curious

– STRUCTURE

• Similar to lecture
POSTER GRAPHICS

• NEVER post copy of paper!
  • easier to read paper in proceedings

• Guidelines from lecture generally applicable here, however:
  • Can show equations, if you need them to discuss with experts
  • Can have more detail, if you are there to explain
  • Can also use 3-D objects, samples, etc.
Sample Poster

Large title: 77 pt

Bullet point abstract

Main headings 44 pt

Text in bullet points. No complete sentences

Light or white background

Conclusions – in bullet points
POSTER CONDUCT

- Be present at poster when required
- Use the poster as a backdrop to discuss your work with interested parties
- Actively engage visitors
  - Offer to give them brief explanation
  - Have a 2-3 minute oral summary prepared
  - Continue to discuss with really interested visitors
CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

PURPOSE

• Objective of conference – meet your colleagues for informal discussion
  • Lectures, etc., merely structures to facilitate this
  • Most important session: the coffee break!
• Make contacts for jobs, future cooperation and collaboration
• Learn what isn’t in the formal papers and lectures
  • Black magic
  • Doubts
  • New directions
CONFERENCE CONDUCT

• If you can’t attend, notify the conference organizers as much in advance as possible
• Introduce yourself to colleagues you would like to meet.
  • But don’t be a pest!
• During discussion period after lecture
  • DO ask questions.
  • DON’T monopolize discussion, or carry on dialogue with lecturer
• Use coffee breaks, meals, evenings, etc. to meet your colleagues whom you don’t normally see
  • Avoid hanging around with your clique!
• Business cards
SUMMARY

• Transmit information in the way best suited for the audience
  – Remember their limitations

• Clear graphics

• Speak slow, loud

• Stay on time
  – Cut Material
  – Rehearse!

• Make a good impression for
  – Yourself
  – Your institution
THANK YOUR FOR YOUR ATTENTION. Want more? Read Ch. 4 of:

http://www.worldscientific.com/worldscibooks/10.1142/10145

or “google” boxman communicating science