



## Presentations

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## Course Of Preparation and Writing Scientific Reports (208 AP)

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## Things to Think About

**1. Oral Communication is different from written communication**

Listeners have one chance to hear your talk and can't "re-read" when they get confused. In many situations, they have or will hear several talks on the same day. Being clear is particularly important if the audience can't ask questions during the talk.

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### 3. Think about your rhetorical goals

For conference talks, for example, It is recommend two rhetorical goals:

leave your audience with a clear picture of the general idea of your contribution, and make them want to read your paper.

Your presentation should not replace your paper, but rather whet the audience appetite for it.

Thus, it is commonly useful to view information in the paper that can't be covered as briefly in the presentation.

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There are two well-know ways to communicate your points effectively.

- The first is to **K.I.S.S.** (keep it simple stupid). Focus on getting one to three key points across. Think about how much you remember from a talk last week.
- Second, repeat key insights: tell them what you're going to tell them (Forecast), tell them, and tell them what you told them (Summary).

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### 4. Practice in public

It is hard distilling work down to 20 or 30 minutes.

### 5. Prepare

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Things to Think About A

### 2. Think about your audience

Most audiences should be addressed in layers: some are experts in your sub-area, some are experts in the general area, and others know little or nothing.

Who is most important to you? Can you still leave others with something?

For example, make the body to experts, but make the forecast and summary accessible to all.

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Things to Think About 1

## A Generic Conference Talk Outline

This conference talk outline is a starting point, not a rigid template. Most good speakers average two minutes per slide (not counting title and outline slides), and thus use about a dozen slides for a twenty minute presentation.



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A Generic Conference Talk Outline 11

## How to Give a good Talk

1. be neat (spelling, grammar and legibility)
2. waste space
3. covet brevity (Always do not use complete sentences, just key words. Do not use whole paragraphs and do not read every word).
4. Do not cover your slides



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How to Give a good Talk 1

### Title/author/affiliation (1 slide)

### Forecast (1 slide)

Give gist of problem attacked and insight found (What is the one idea you want people to leave with? This is the "abstract" of an oral presentation.)

### Outline (1 slide)

Give talk structure. Some speakers prefer to put this at the bottom of their title slide. (Audiences like predictability.)



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A Generic Conference Talk Outline 11

### 6. use color

### 7. Illustrate (Confucius says `` A picture = 10K words,``)

### 8. make eye contact

### 9. skip slides in a long talk

### 10. practice (If you do practice, argue with any suggestions you get and make sure your talk is not longer than the time you have to present it)



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How to Give a good Talk 11



**Summary (1 slide)**

**Future Work (0-1 slides)**  
Optionally give problems this research opens up.

**Backup Slides (0-3 slides)**  
Optionally have a few slides ready (not counted in your talk total) to answer expected questions. (Likely question areas: ideas glossed over, shortcomings of methods or results, and future work.)



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- **Background**
  - **Motivation and Problem Statement (1-2 slides)**  
(Why should anyone care? Most researchers overestimate how much the audience knows about the problem they are attacking.)
  - **Related Work (0-1 slides)**  
Cover superficially or omit; refer people to your paper.



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**Academic Interview Talks**

The goal for any interview talk is very different than a conference talk. The goal of a conference talk is to get people interested in your paper and your work.

The goal of an interview talk is to get a job, for which interest in your work is one part.



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**Methods (1 slide)**  
Cover quickly in short talks; refer people to your paper.

**Results (4-6 slides)**  
Present key results and key insights. This is main body of the talk. Its internal structure varies greatly as a function of the researcher's contribution. (Do not superficially cover all results; cover key result well. Do not just present numbers; interpret them to give insights. Do not put up large tables of numbers.)



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- Do the summary and future work from the conference talk in a manner accessible to all.

- Add 10 minutes to survey all the other stuff you have done (to show your breadth)

- Save 5 minutes for questions (to show that you are organized).



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here are two key audiences for an academic interview talk, and you have to reach both.

One is the people in your sub-area, who you must impress with the depth of your contribution.

The other is the rest of the department, who you must get to understand your problem, why it is important, and a hand-wave at what you did. Both audiences will evaluate how well you speak as an approximation of how well you can teach.



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## Other Talks

Other talks should be prepared using the same principles of considering audience and rhetorical purpose.

A presentation on a **project in a graduate class**, for example, seeks to reach the professor first and fellow students second.

Its purpose is to get a good grade by impressing people that a quality project was done. Thus, methods should be described in must more detail than for a conference talk.



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An algorithm:

- Take a 20-minute conference talk.
- Expand the 5 minute introduction to 20 minutes to drive home the problem, why it's important, and the gist of what you've done.
- Do the rest of the conference talk, minus the summary and future work.
- Add 10 minutes of deeper stuff from your thesis (to show your depth). It is okay lose people outside of your sub-area (as long as you get them back in the next bullet).



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**Five Golden Rules for giving academic presentations**

- 1) DON'T EVER BEGIN WITH AN APOLOGY
- 2) DON'T EVER UNDERESTIMATE THE AUDIENCE'S INTELLIGENCE
- 3) RESPECT THE TIME LIMITS
- 4) DON'T SURVEY THE WHOLE DAMN FIELD
- 5) REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE AN ADVOCATE, NOT THE DEFENDANT



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**Thank You**



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