

Guidance for a successful presentation

Questions to ask yourself before you start

- *What situation is this?*
 - Who is the audience and what do they expect? Identify what they will find interesting.
- *What level is appropriate?*
 - Better safe than sorry; It is much better to aim on a too low level than a too high.
 - The non-experts in the audience will feel included and understand your message.
 - The fellow experts in the field will appreciate a well-made presentation with the topic explained properly and the results put in perspective.
- *What is the purpose?*
 - What do you want to accomplish: Create interest, alarm, joy, action...?

Working strategy

- Decide on a clear message
 - One can hardly be over-explicit regarding the message.
 - Formulate your elevator pitch, i.e. what you would like to say summarized in a few sentences (30s).
 - It sums up the unique aspects of what you do and phrases it in a way that excites others.
 - It answer the key questions **what, when, how, why, whom** in a direct way and with a simple language.
 - All conclusions should be summarized last in the presentation.
- Put your message in perspective
 - Make sure you relate to the wider topic, explain why you have done the things you are presenting and what consequences your findings have.
- Red thread
 - The purpose of the presentation should be imprinted throughout.
 - The presentation has to have a logical structure and all transitions must feel natural. You save precious time by making the structure first.
 - Remove all unnecessary information. No side tracks if it isn't a deliberate part of the dramaturgy.
- Simple, direct and memorable by the Aristotelian method
 1. **Tell them what you will tell them.** During your opener you lay out why you are speaking to the audience. By telling them what you will present, they will remember your presentation better.
 2. **Tell them.** This is the majority of the presentation where you pour out all your content.
 3. **Tell them what you told them.** When concluding, reiterate you salient points.

Make sure you...

- **Use the Bolin Centre template**

Font: Verdana. Font sizes: Title 26 pt, Text 26 pt, 20 pt (normal) and 14 pt. New text boxes sometimes default in Calibri 18 pt. If so, please change to Verdana 20 pt.
- **Introduce yourself**
 - Name and affiliation should be visible on the first slide, and say a few words about yourself before diving in to the topic.
 - Name and contact details should be visible on the last slide.
- **Use relevant material that interests the audience**
 - Make use of images and diagrams which illustrate the most important issues.
 - Suggestive images or images with unexpected angles tickle the imagination, but they must be relevant.
 - Please make sure that you have permission to use a particular image in your presentation and write the acknowledgement in a small font size on the slide.
- **Do not overload the mind**
 - Think minimalistic – only a few objects on each page. Mark interesting things with arrows.
 - Use bullet points and make use of the indented sub-bullets to get structure and clarity.
 - The audience have difficulties focusing if the text is too long on a slide. Make it short.
 - Use a font size large enough to make the text easy to read.
 - Avoid abbreviations and difficult terminology. If you have to use them, define them.
 - Please have in mind that some people cannot distinguish between red and green.
 - Make your images and diagrams big and wide (100 dpi for power point).
 - Use props that are related to your presentation if you have any to make your presentation memorable.
- **Practice!**
 - Speak clearly and not too fast. Pauses are necessary for the message to be able to sink in.
 - Show the audience respect by keeping the time.
 - Murphy's Law; "If anything can go wrong it will, and at the worst possible time". The best way to handle unexpected problems is to be prepared.
 - Ask someone to be your audience as you practice and let them give you feedback.
 - Have fun with it! Spreading knowledge about your interest should be enjoyable.

Good luck!