

**SE 3I03 Fall 2004**

# **01 Oral Presentations**

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# Styles of Presentation

1. Read a paper or prepared statement
2. Write on a blackboard
3. Slides in heading/bullet form
4. Slides in statement/picture form
5. PowerPoint style
6. All cartoons or pictures
7. Interviews and moderated discussions
8. Question and answer

# Preparation

- Begin with an audience assessment
- Practice but do not let your talk become stiff
- Give a “dry run” of your talk before a real audience
- Solicit criticism from your colleagues
- Watch yourself on video

# The Start

- Introduce yourself and explain the objective of your talk
  - In some cases someone else will introduce you
- Connect with your audience
  - Tell a joke or a story to break the ice
  - Tell the audience something about yourself
- Convey to the audience that you have something to say that they will want to hear
- Start off with enthusiasm and confidence

# Rapport with Audience

- Know your audience
- Make the talk accessible
  - The beginning of the talk, at least, should be understandable to anyone in the audience
- Talk to the audience
  - Do not read from your paper or your notes
  - Make eye contact
- Be cognizant of the audience's concerns

# Organization

- The most valuable part of a talk is usually its organization
  - Organization is the product you give to the audience
  - It often takes more time and creativity to organize facts than to find the facts themselves
  - Good organization will enable the audience to understand and remember your ideas
- Organize, organize, and organize
  - Organize your ideas into a story that is coherent and easy to tell

# Command of Subject

- The audience will not take you seriously if they feel you do not understand the subject
- Make a “mandated” talk your own talk
  - Only talk about what you really understand

# Balance

- Not too long, not too deep
- Confident, but not cocky
- Tailor your talk to the expected audience
- Show emotion, but keep it under control

# Delivery

- Stand tall, speak up
  - Make sure you can be heard
  - Be courteous and not arrogant
- Be authentic
- Be professional
  - Be honest—do not act like a politician or car salesperson
  - Acknowledge the work of others
- Avoid technical details unless they are crucial
- Repeat key points in different ways

# Visual aids

- Effective visual aids are needed for an effective talk
  - Visual aids are used to focus the audience on what you have to say
  - The audience will remember what they see more than what they hear
- Examples:
  - Slides
  - PowerPoint style software
  - Photographs
  - Videos
  - Cartoons
  - Notation, tables, and diagrams

# Slides

- Slides can be an excellent aid for both the speaker and the audience
- Keep the number of words to a minimum
  - One line phrases are best
  - But always be precise
- Use “landscape” slides
- If possible, have a paper or “annotated slides” ready to hand out at the end of the talk
- Have a concise conclusion slide

# Notation, Tables, and Diagrams

- Explain what your notation, tables, and diagrams mean
- Use traditional notation when available
  - Introduce new notation if necessary
  - Practice good abuse of notation
- Keep tables and diagrams simple

# Handling Questions

- Questions and comments can be very helpful
  - Use questions to gain feedback from the audience
  - Use questions to emphasize your points
- Before the talk, think about the most likely questions and how you would answer them
  - You might want to prepare slides for these questions
- Cut off long-winded comments

# Manage your Time

- Finish when your time is up
- Have some material that can be deleted and some material that can be added
- Do not “flash” slides
- If necessary, delay questions to the end of the talk

# Keep Control of the Talk

- Do not allow talking in the audience
- Deflect hostile questions
- Do not argue with members of the audience during the talk
- Do not let someone else hijack your talk

# Be Conservative

- Use simple slides
- Avoid nontraditional presentations
- Do not be flippant, cute, or fancy
  - Do not use lots of fonts
  - Use color with great care
  - Use sound effects and animation very sparingly

# Do not Depend on Special Facilities

- Be prepared for equipment malfunction
  - Always have backup slides or notes
  - Consider bringing your own equipment
- Make no assumptions about the arrangement in the room

# The Finish

- Finish with a concise conclusion
- Reiterate the important points of the talk
- Use the talk as a springboard to:
  - Make a strong statement,
  - Give a recommendation, or
  - Focus the audience's attention on related issues or future activities

# Final Tips

- Find a style and format that works for you
  - Start with a simple, proven approach
- Find a way to make your talk interesting