Guide to Giving Oral Presentations

Goals:
• Tell a story
• Communicate your ideas
• Highlight your expertise
• Teach

Planning: Big Picture
• What story do I want to tell?
• What idea do I want to communicate?
• What aspects of my expertise do I want to share?
• What am I trying to teach?

Planning: Audience
To whom will I be talking?
• Undergraduates (as a TA or instructor)
• Graduate Students (as an instructor)
• Peers
• Experts
• Mixed Audience (range of understanding)
• General Audience (basic understanding)

Planning: Facilities
Where will I present my talk?
• Small classroom
• Mid-sized class-room
• Large lecture hall
• Auditorium

TANGENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS
• Lighting
• Voice Projection
• Screens, Boards, Easels, etc.
General Information

Take-Home Message

Accuracy

If audience members learn one thing from your talk, what do you want them to learn?

Did you cover information accurately?

Delivery: Stage Presence

- Weird movements, pacing
- Hands in pocket, slouching
- Facing computer rather than people
- Wild laser pointer movements
- Fast or slow speech rate

Delivery: Speech

- Volume: Project your voice!
- Clarity: Articulate! Look for confused faces
- Pace
- Content Density: avoid too much too fast
Chemistry Seminar

Delivery: Flow

1. Introduction
   State a problem or question
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Conclusions

Visual Aids: Font Type

Arial
Arial Black
Times New Roman
Gill Sans
Baskerville - Italicized
Bank Gothic

Visual Aids

Font Size: 18 or higher
Font Size: 24
Font Size: 36
**Videos**

From web page of Professor Loren Williams

Trigonal Bipyramidal Crystals

Courtesy of NASA
Handling Questions

- Exercise wisdom; do not pretend to know answers if you don’t!
- Do your homework! Prepare for obvious questions.
- Respectfully defer questions until later if pressed for time and when appropriate

Background - Goal

How does HPV E7 inactivate retinoblastoma tumor suppressor protein to induce transformation of viral host cells?

Electron Density Map of HPV E7 Oncoprotein

**Chemistry Seminar**

**Methods & Results**

- Method #1 → Result #1
- Method #2 → Result #2, etc.

vs.

- Method #1 → Result #1, #2, #3
- Method #2 → Result #4, #5, #6

**Discussion/Conclusion**

- Restate the question/problem
- Answer the question
- Describe the overall impact of the work
- Be succinct - few words - no sentences!
- Give take-home message
- End with acknowledgments

**Stimulate Discussion**

**Time Management**

- Be prepared to adjust
- Be aware of time
- Defer questions to end
- Do not exceed time or go grossly under time

**Attire**

- Comfortable
- Clean
- Covered