



Tips for Presentations

1. KEEP WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT. This is not only a tip, but a requirement. You will be warned when you have 2 minutes left, and stopped at 7 minutes.
To avoid problems in this respect, go through your presentation at least once before the final date, preferably with a friend. The friend can give you feedback, and the experience will give you ideas about how to improve your presentation.
When you go through your "rehearsal", keep track of the time you take and the length of your notes or written material. This will give you an estimate to use in the future (for example, I estimate I can read 7 double spaced pages or cover 4 pages of handwritten notes in 10 minutes).
2. Write your material. You can prepare it as a paper which you read, or as a series of notes, but have it written in some form (preferably typed, double spaced).
3. Use visual materials wherever possible. This can include writing on the blackboard, overhead transparencies, handout material. It is a good idea to provide your audience with an outline of your presentation on the board or on a transparency.
Blackboard: Write your material on the board BEFORE your presentation if possible.
Data: When presenting your data do it with visual support: graphs, figures, sketches of locations, handouts, etc. If your data is in tabular form, provide handouts if possible. Keep them as simple as possible.
4. When presenting tables and charts: lead the audience slowly through each table or chart. For example, when presenting a table, follow these steps:
 - provide a theoretical or practical rationale why you are looking at the data,
 - identify all of the variables in the table (preferably pointing to where they are represented: e.g. 'at the top of the table, and down the columns', 'at the left side and across the rows', etc.),
 - identify what the cells represent,
 - point to a specific cell, and give an illustration of how to read it,
 - point to the theoretically significant comparisons in the table, and identify how you interpret them,
 - state the overall finding of the table, and
 - state the overall interpretation you make of the table.

Suggested Outline

Your objective is to communicate the central points of your research in as clear a manner as possible. This does not necessarily mean you should adopt the same format as a paper. Here is an example.

1. Identify the problem. Make clear why it is a problem.
2. Mention how others have dealt with the problem and how the way they have dealt with the problem is inadequate or provides a basis for your investigation.
3. Discuss how you approached the problem, and why it is appropriate to deal with the inadequacies.
4. Describe what you did.
5. Identify your most important results.
6. Discuss the implications of your results
 - for the methods used (strong points and weak points)
 - for the original problem
 - for future research