How to give a professional talk

Kelly Crosby, University Writing Program
Today’s Topics

Understanding your purpose
Meeting your audience’s needs
Maximizing your talk / poster
Purpose

To present the most current information on your research in a short timespan by:

- Engaging your audience immediately
- Making the information accessible to all
- Supplementing visually when needed (oral presentations)
- Being the person MOST excited about your work (it’s contagious!)
audience

**ORAL PRESENTATION**

- Varied knowledge & interest in your topic
- Is seated and focused
- Can hear the context to understand the research better
- Will ask questions (hopefully!)

**POSTER PRESENTATION**

- Varied knowledge & interest in your topic
- Passes by and stops (limited focus)
- Will engage visually more than auditorily
- Needs visual guidance to move from context to content
- Will ask questions (hopefully!)
content

- What is the **problem** and why is it a problem?
- What has been done about it **before**?
- What are you **doing** (or have done) about it?
- What additional value does your **approach** provide?
- Where do we go **from here**?

*Remember to collaborate on this with your faculty advisor!*

ENAR Effective Presentation Guidelines (2000)
maximizing 10-12 minutes of airtime

- Get the audience hooked! Place them and/or you in the context
- Think of the “narrative” or story of the work
- Use connective devices as you speak (for contrast, concession, examples, to transition among ideas) to guide the audience
- Keep concepts simple
- Be aware of your breadth and depth: try to strike a balance
- Think of your “takeaway” idea to end on
building a slide presentation

Simplicity is best
Color & font matter
Limit transitions & animation
Keep graphics high-quality
Use graphs/charts
Use the slide sorter to view the flow of your presentation
you as a public speaker

Eliminate your distractions: pronunciation of key terms, spelling on slides, issues in the room (lighting, etc)

Know yourself under pressure: Do you hold your breath? Do your shoulders go up? Does your mouth get dry?

Dress comfortably yet professionally: This helps your body language

Be confident and don’t apologize: The audience is a fan club!
maximizing your poster

*First see the [URC poster guidelines](#) and work with your faculty advisor on the content!

- **Be Simple!** Emphasize results and conclusions. YOU are there for the details. Format text with bullets.
- **Think BIG.** Everything should be legible from 4 feet away.
- **Work with color for consistency and emphasis.**
- **Present data in graphics.** Avoid tables. Trend lines (through line and bar graphs) present in a memorable way. Keep all headings and labels horizontal.
responding to questions

- Repeat the question back to the person to be sure you understand it well
- Answer one piece at a time
- Keep your answer short
- Offer to correspond later if necessary
Good luck!

Kelly Crosby, University Writing Program

kacrosby@ucdavis.edu

A link to this presentation:

https://docs.google.com/a/ucdavis.edu/presentation/d/1rGNcVZbipMTv-HSQsOXrXhAmrseZpRqU-XZ_Mwh841Q/edit?usp=sharing