

Course Prints

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Orientation

Aims 目的

The central aims of this course are to help students/researchers in any field to

1. acquire skills in drafting logical, clear and persuasively effective academic presentations.
2. develop confidence and competence in presenting and communicating in English in academic contexts.

Academic presentations are an important activity in global research communities today. In an atmosphere that is relaxed but at the same time challenging, I want to show that it is possible to enjoy sharing our ideas in English. The first step is to think deeply about why we're speaking and what our main point is. The next is careful preparation based on the key principles of logical clarity and persuasive support.

Course Outline 授業内容

Classes are conducted in an informal atmosphere, with students discussing issues and working together in pairs or small groups, changing partners each week. Most lessons include a short interactive lecture on one of the themes listed below, with related group, class discussions and exercises. While all the time pursuing the two key aims mentioned above, the following topics are studied during the semester, not necessarily in this order.

- Introduction: the functions and pleasures of presentations
- Finding your controlling idea
- Showing significance
- Presentation Introductions
- Logical support
- Conclusions
- Language for structural clarity, humanizing
- Delivery: voice, body language, interaction with slides
- Effective slide use and design
- Question time

Students are encouraged to deliver two presentations, at least one with slides, during the semester in order to gain experience and receive helpful detailed feedback for further improvement.

Learning Materials 教科書

All materials are prepared and provided by Mark. Electronic copies of key materials will be sent to students throughout the course.

While some materials are original products of the instructor, the following sources are also used:

1. Adrian Wallwork, *English for Presentations at International Conferences*, New York: Springer, 2010.
2. Michael Alley, *The Craft of Scientific Presentations*, New York: Springer, 2003.
3. Garr Reynolds, *Presentation Zen*, Berkeley (CA): New Riders, 2008.

Initial Preparation

A presentation is not an article (論文). A presentation is used to

1. disseminate your ideas.
2. test your ideas (not test yourself).
3. gain useful feedback and ideas from other researchers.

Quite often a presentation is a part of the development process of your research and not the main end product. Conversely, if you've already published the content of your presentation, then that's another reason to relax.

Points to consider at the beginning of your preparation

1. Where

We need to consider

the geographical location.

cultural context: is your presentation suitable for the culture in which you're presenting?

presentation space and facilities: do they have the equipment we need? Can it be relied on?

2. Who

It's useful and realistic to recognize that the audience is not a group of examiners, but a valuable resource for you in the development and dissemination (communication) of your research.

We need to consider

the cultural background (possibly varied) of the audience Are you sure there's nothing that can cause offence in your presentation? Remember, most times that people cause cultural offense it's because they have no idea that it is culturally offensive.

the level of specialist knowledge of the audience. Is the conference narrowly focused in your area or a more general academic audience? Is it open to people well outside your field?

whether your target audience is a specific group within the larger audience who might be attending your presentation.

the language background of the audience, both in terms of general language competency and subject-specific vocabulary (jargon).

what the audience is expecting from you.

3. *What*

We need to consider the message we want to leave with the audience. Yes, there are accepted, commonly used formats for presentations in some fields, like this...

Background

Aim

Significance

Method

Results

Discussion

Summary/Conclusions

Future studies

... but simply “data dumping” into each of these sections is not effective. As in an article, you need not just a topic, but your idea in relation to that topic. Both you and the audience need to know what your “controlling idea” is in order to make sense of the information you are giving them. To be effective in your preparation and efficient in your preparation, you need to find your aim and controlling idea at the beginning. The presentation will be structured around supporting that idea.

4. *Why*

We need to consider...

what the audience’s motivation is for attending your presentation.

why they should give more attention to your presentation than they (or you) usually do.

Both of these points ultimately relate to the question of significance, which you should communicate at the beginning and repeat at the end, and even in the body of your presentation, if possible. You are not Steve Jobs or a Nobel Prize winner (yet), so you don’t have a “captive audience.” You have to work to keep them attentive.

Communication Goals of Presentations

Your presentation should do at least one, and ideally several, of the following things. It's worth asking yourself which of these things you're achieving.

- Inform: giving people the information you want them to have. Actually, you can also get really useful information from your audience.
- Impress: leaving the audience with a positive impression of your work and possibly yourself.
- Persuade: encouraging the audience to adopt an opinion with regard to your key idea.
- Interest: getting people emotionally involved in your content, ideas.
- Inspire: encouraging people to want to act on your ideas.
- Entertain: giving the people an enjoyable experience. You might be afraid of seeming not serious about your work, but work and play need not, and probably should not, be opposites.

Public Relations experts use the principle of AIDA. It's often used in communication in the context of sales, but it can be applied to academic presentations.

- ▣ **Attraction:** Get the audiences initial attention. This begins with your initial proposal written long before the presentation time. Your title is also part of this. And then your
 - You want people to..
 - a). attend your presentation
 - b). become immediately engaged with the content
- ▣ **Interest:** You want the audience to be increasingly interested in your content as it proceeds. If they don't become more interested, they will easily lose interest altogether. Remember how easily YOU lose interest as an audience member. Building a crescendo into your presentation is a good idea. Don't confuse people, but reveal some of the best and most convincing points later in the presentation, if possible.
- ▣ **Desire/Decision:** You ultimately want the audience to not just be interested but to desire more information or to make a decision related to the idea you've proposed.
- ▣ **Action:** You want to have the audience act in some way. The most obvious way is for them to take the action of approaching you after your presentation to ask for more information, or even to suggest future collaboration.

Why You Should Probably Write a Script

A script takes time, and often people are in a situation before a conference where they don't have enough time. So it's easy to convince ourselves we don't need a script. But, generally speaking, you'd best write one. Here's why:

1. The script can be read and checked by others before you deliver the presentation. You can readily receive invaluable feedback as well as language correction through a script, which could save you embarrassment and render your presentation both more accurate and more effective.
2. Reading a script is in most cases not desirable, but if you are delivering your presentation through memory and notes, then if you have a "meltdown," suddenly forgetting your chain of thought, the script provides a "safety net" that can almost guarantee you can restart and complete your presentation. Hopefully you won't have to use it, but it's nice to know it's sitting there in case you do.
3. The script can be distributed to the audience after your presentation or you can offer to email it to interested people. This means that they will take something of your presentation away with them. It also allows you to reduce the amount of detail in your presentation because you can refer the audience to that text.
4. You have a permanent record of your presentation, which could be very useful in future. You may deliver a similar presentation again, for example, in which case you can simply modify the script you have to suit the new context. It's more efficient than attempting to reconstruct your presentation using the limited data and notes of your existing slides.

Why You Should Probably Write a Script **FIRST**

It's not always the case, but in general it makes sense to write a script first, then prepare slides based on that. There are a couple of reasons for this:

1. Logical "Tightness" and Flow

In academic writing you typically connect sentences logically, and build them into paragraphs, with transitions between. As you write you make explicit connections and finely coordinate words, sentences and paragraphs in a way that you otherwise probably wouldn't do. In other words, writing encourages you to work carefully at a minute level, making clarifying insertions, removing unnecessary elements to produce a smooth discursive flow. Presentations built through slides can sometimes lack this flow, seeming instead rather mechanical as you jump from one slide to the next.

2. Prioritizing Speaker over Slides

When you watch presentations, sometimes you can actually guess those that have been put together without a script. The speaker is obviously following along with each slide, sometimes they're actually reading the slide. This has the effect of prioritizing the slides and focusing the audience's attention there. Simply put, it is as if the speaker is a kind of servant to the slides, which is not a good idea. Ultimately, the slides should be there to serve the speaker. When that relationship is inverted, with the speaker following the slides, it usually makes the speaker seem somewhat passive, which is not a positive image to project. It can also take the human energy and momentum out of your presentation.

Complex ideas, so ... Keep It Simple, Strong!



Intro

Background

Significance

My Main idea is X (Thesis Statement)

Outline (箇条書き): "I will discuss A, then B, then C"

These 2 parts can swap positions

Body (Support/Evidence)

Supporting Part A

Supporting Part B

Supporting Part C

You can add more Background detail here if you want

Conclusion

Summarize A, B and C

My main idea has been X

So... (final comment... future)

These 2 parts can swap positions

Short Presentation Template



Intro

Background: _____

Statement of Idea: _____

Significance: _____

Predictor (parts): _____

Body

Support I

Support II

Support III

Conclusion

Synthesis / Summary: _____

Restate Key Idea: _____

Final Comment: _____

Reflecting on Your Script

Introduction

1. Is some background information given? What?

2. What is the basic thesis (TS)? _____

3. Is it a strong thesis? (clear, new, provocative) _____

4. Is there a strong reason given for presenting on this idea? _____

5. Is the structure predicted? How? _____

Body

6. Are the parts of the body clearly, logically structured? _____

7. What are the key points in the body? _____

8. Do the points in the body really support the thesis? _____

9. Is the research helpful? _____

Conclusion

10. Does the conclusion restate the thesis? _____

11. Is the significance emphasized? How? _____

12. Is there some kind of memorable final line? What? _____

Do you have any further suggestions for helping to improve the presentation?

Useful Transitional Phrases

When giving a presentation, certain **keywords** are often used to **signpost** the different stages.

▶ Starting presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good morning/good afternoon (ladies and gentlemen) • The topic of my presentation today is ... • What I'm going (I'd like) to talk about today is ...
▶ Why you are giving the presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this presentation is ... • My aim/objective is to ... • This is important because ...
▶ The main supporting points (outline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main points/issues I will be talking about are... • There are ... parts in my presentation... • I'll proceed through ... parts... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • firstly/secondly/next/finally, I'll discuss/look at
▶ Introducing the first point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's/Let me start/begin with ...
▶ Showing graphics, slides etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to illustrate this by showing you...
▶ Ending a point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, that's... • So much for ...
▶ Moving on to the next point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now let me/let's move on to ... • Now I'd like to look at ...
▶ Giving more details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to expand on this aspect/problem/point • Let me elaborate on that • Would you like me to expand on/elaborate on that?
▶ Referring to something off the topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to digress here for a moment and just mention that ...
▶ Referring to a later topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll come back (return) to this point later ...
▶ Referring back to an earlier point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me go back to what I said earlier about ...
▶ Summarizing/repeating main points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to recap the main points of my presentation: • I'd now like to sum up the main points which were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first I covered - then I talked about - finally I looked at • The main point I've tried to make is ...
▶ Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me conclude by saying that / quoting ... • In conclusion, let me leave you with this thought: ...
▶ Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, I'll be happy to answer your questions. • Now I'd like to invite any questions you may have. • Do you have any questions?

Language Issues

Keep it Clear

- One sentence, one idea
- Reduce pronoun use
- Avoid jargon
- Define simply any technical terms (use slides for terms/translations if useful)
- Use images to support explanations
- Use concrete (rather than abstract) nouns
- Vary sentence length
- Simplify grammar of sentences
- Cut useless details, and say “This is a very simplified description/illustration.”
- Don’t need it? Ditch it.

Make it a little personal

* The best presentations are often more like a lively discussion than a performance.

3 Basic Levels of Formality:

1. Formal
2. Neutral/relatively informal
3. Very Informal

* Most audiences prefer presenters who deliver in a relatively informal way.

- Tell a story
- Active over passive form
- Verbs over nouns
- Don’t be afraid to use “I/we”
- Use regular vocabulary as far as possible
- Use spoken grammar, sentence length
- Emote naturally and describe emotional responses occasionally

* Reference: Adrian Wallwork, *English for Presentations at International Conferences*, Springer, 2010

Delivery: *relax!*

“Don’t survive it, enjoy it”

Communicate

You’ve written the speech, the content and English have been checked. So you don’t need to worry about that. In the introduction, try asking a question, even if you don’t expect an answer. When you’re writing a speech, avoid very loooooooooooooooooooooooooooooong words, paragraphs, sentences.

American University (UCLA) research into communications showed an audience is influenced by a speaker in the following percentages:

Spoken Words	7 %
Voice	38 %
Body Language	55 %

Body Language

- * It’s not good to read your speech. Use notes if possible.
- * Keep eye contact with your audience.
- * Don’t be afraid to move and gesture.
- * Have good posture.
- * Be yourself

Voice

- Speak at a good volume.
- Speak with energy, sincerity, passion
- Pronounce words correctly.
- Try to use natural, friendly tones.
- Vary your voice, or you will sound boring.
- Speak at a natural speed.
- Pause (stop) sometimes, especially between topics/paragraphs.....

If you prepare, you can relax...

- ◇ Practice your speech over and over, so you can be confident.
- ◇ Prepare clear notes (cue cards) to help you.
- ◇ Time your speech.

10 Common Delivery Faults

- Reading text
- Looking at screen
- Eye movement fast, erratic
- Speaking too fast
- Low volume
- Too flat
- Unclear enunciation
- Too static, tense
- Poor posture
- Standing in front of screen
- Distracting movements

Why love the pause?

- To mark a transition, maintaining logical clarity
- To help the audience absorb difficult material
- To promote deeper consideration of your idea
- For emphasis
- For aesthetic effect

Slide Design

A long shortlist of key points to consider when preparing slides
Advice compiled from numerous sources

Text

- ▣ Your title slide is best made as simple and eye-catching as possible. Cut unnecessary information.
- ▣ Have all text checked by someone else... a native speaker, if you are working in another language.
- ▣ Minimize text as much as possible. Often, you don't need grammatically complete sentences.
- ▣ Avoid unnecessary repetition of phrases.
- ▣ Use verbs sometimes.
- ▣ Make sure the font is large enough to be seen comfortably from the back of the room.
- ▣ In general, use fonts that are easy to read, such as Arial, Helvetica, Calibri, Cambria, Century, Times New Roman (most common). With these, you generally need at least a 22 point font size.
- ▣ In general, avoid using UPPERCASE letters, except in titles. They're difficult to read.
- ▣ Ensure that the font/background contrast is easily sufficient for viewing under the room's projection conditions. (5% of people have difficulty distinguishing red from green, so be especially careful with these colors together.) In general use font only on single color areas of background without lines.
- ▣ Use varied font sizes, colors and location to hierarchize information in terms of importance.
- ▣ Section titles are useful, but can be very boring when everyone is using them, so consider alternatives. Here are some rather informal examples:

Background

Aim

Significance

Method

Results

Discussion

Future plans



The story so far

What's my point?

Who cares?

How did we do it?

What we found

What does it mean?

What's next?

- ▣ Don't overuse bullets/lists. They are a narcotic... they make people sleepy.
- ▣ The "1-7-7 rule" is not really a rule and can be broken, but it is a useful guideline:
 - 1 slide: 1 idea
 - 7 lines per slide maximum
 - 7 words per line maximum
- ▣ Make sure that each point in a bullet list is grammatically consistent with the others.
- ▣ Using slides for showing translations is effective. Ensure that if you do this often, one of the languages is given priority.

Interacting with Slides

- ❖ Use slides only to clarify your point or process so that they serve your speech, not compete with it or repeat it.
- ❖ Make sure you give the audience enough time to read everything on slides. Don't expect them to read and listen at the same time.
- ❖ Be careful using a script below slides on your laptop. It can give the impression your speech is following, rather than leading, the slides.
- ❖ Don't use slides as prompts for yourself. Don't read the slides.
- ❖ Gesturing to the screen or using a laser pointer can be OK, but if you are able to highlight your specific point on the screen using animation, such as zoom or fade or on-screen pointers, then it's often better to do that.
- ❖ Prepare slides with supplementary detail for possible use during question time.
- ❖ Make careful decisions about the speed at which you introduce information. Sometimes, exposing points or images one by one using animation allows you to better control the audience's focus and absorption of individual points. On the other hand, you may want to show all of your points on the slide at once so that you are free of your laptop.

Images, Diagrams

- ♣ Use images such as photos for clarity and impact, not for decoration.
- ♣ Be careful in using more than one photographic image per slide.
- ♣ Make sure the image is big and simple enough so that the audience is not struggling to comprehend details.
- ♣ Don't squeeze information, imagery onto slides: "negative (blank/empty) space" is good.
- ♣ Be careful when cutting and pasting diagrams, images that you don't lose too much clarity.
- ♣ If you need to show a complete table or graph, then clearly highlight the main points, areas beforehand in order to accelerate comprehension.
- ♣ Slides are great for comparisons, but avoid squeezing graphs side-by-side on one slide if it makes both slides difficult to see. Consider editing out unnecessary parts.
- ♣ Use photos as well as diagrams if it helps to show what you're talking about.
- ♣ Don't be completely afraid of showing humans on your slides.
- ♣ Don't have your organization logo on every slide.

General Design

- Don't use slides as a "dumping ground" (ゴミ箱) for extra information. If the information is not necessary, cut it, or send it to supporting handouts.
- Animation is not evil, but it should be used carefully and with restraint.
- Color is a matter of taste. Just make sure it does not distract from your content.
- Color can be used effectively to clarify, for example to distinguish parts... of a diagram, even of the presentation itself.

10 Simple Tips for Visual Presentations

1. **Keep slides to a minimum.** The most common PowerPoint/Keynote pitfall is “slide overload.” It may be tempting to use a slide for each point, but keeping slides to a minimum ensures that each one will pack a more powerful visual punch.
2. **Brevity leads to longevity.** The shorter your presentation, the longer it will live on in the minds of your audience. A meaningful message delivered during a tight (no waste) presentation will leave the audience wanting more.
3. **Don’t data-dump.** Inundating an audience with unnecessary information is a surefire way to irritate them. You can provide details in a handout for people to review later.
4. **Pump up the font.** You can have the most wonderful PowerPoint presentation ever, but if your tiny font is unreadable, all your work will be wasted.
5. **Don’t let the slides/video pull focus.** Don’t allow your slides to become the star of your presentation. Focus on your key point — let PowerPoint/Keynote be an aid rather than an escape.
6. **Think of your target audience.** Taking your audience’s knowledge base into consideration when formulating your presentation can spare you time and energy wasted on displaying points that they’re already familiar with... or confusing them.
7. **Don’t be a slave to the slides.** Reciting the text on your slides will drive your audience crazy. The audience is there to listen to your insight, not to read, or watch you read. Look at the audience and encourage them to look at you. Presentations are for people!
8. **The darker the room, the duller you get.** While it may be easier to view your presentation in a darkened room, be careful. Cutting the lights immediately sends a message that the focus should be on the slides, rather than on the words they’re hearing from you.
9. **Handouts... really?** While some may be inclined to distribute handouts ahead of a PowerPoint presentation, think carefully about this. You’ve basically given your audience something to distract them from you!
10. **Practice makes perfect.** Practicing your PowerPoint presentation several times before you deliver it will acquaint you with the material and make your talk seem more “natural.” You will look confident and competent.

The Question of Question Time

To understand the function of question time at the end of presentations, it's best to first review why we do presentations at all. That will seem silly, but the funny thing is many graduate students and young researchers somewhat misunderstand the function of presentations. This is not entirely their fault, because when presentations are first practiced, perhaps in high school, we may actually be assessed, graded. In fact, even at university that happens, especially at undergraduate level. Then, when we get to grad school we are told we need to do a presentation for our professor, but often no one tells us why.

Actually, one reason professors may give is that it's good practice for giving papers at academic conferences in the future. But that still doesn't tell us why people go to conferences and do presentations in the first place. So, many people are giving presentations without really having been told why they need to do it? So, it's just assumed presentations are a kind of test we have to go through.

We then see question time at the end of the presentation as the worst part of that test, because it's the part we can't be completely sure of. However much we practice our presentation and however well we present, difficult or weird questions might be asked at the end that we just can't answer.

But why do people ask those questions? To test you? In the real world, usually not. They ask you because they're interested. They are looking at your research question and asking themselves questions about it and then they are hoping you can clarify things for them. But they're also asking those questions to help you. They know that research is all about setting and answering questions, even if they're difficult. So these audience questions make us think about points we may have missed or are not giving enough attention to. That's the function of question time.

Another point is that inexperienced researchers often assume that they must answer every question—again, because they think it's an exam. But you don't need to. Sometimes, the question is bad, unrelated, or it's not a question at all, just a comment. What you need to do first is have the confidence and knowledge to decide that the question is no good, and then have the language to politely not answer the question... we'll work on that in class.

Above all, question time is your time, and it's invaluable for getting feedback and ideas. Don't waste that opportunity by thinking of it as a test and becoming negative. Relax and make question time, and the audience, work for you.

Question Time...

can be a scary time... try to relax and just be honest



Inviting questions

Does anyone have any questions?

Are there any questions?

I'd be happy to respond to any questions or comments you might have.

I think that's about it. I'd like to thank you all for coming today. Do you have any questions?

We have a few minutes for questions.

Do you have any questions or comments/suggestions?

Initial Response to a useful question

Thank you for your question.

I'm glad you asked me that.

That's an excellent question.

That's a very good point

Deferring your response

Let's talk together about that later.

Let me talk to you individually after the session.

Let me get back to you later about that.

I have some good information about that. Let me send it to you later.

I'll be getting to that in just a moment.

When you have no idea of an answer

That's not something I've been dealing with in my research (but perhaps I should)

I'm sorry, but I'm not sure...

I'm afraid I just don't know the answer

I don't know, but it's a good point and I'll check it and answer you later

Didn't hear the question

Sorry. Could you say that again?

Sorry. I couldn't hear you very well.

Not sure of the question's meaning

Sorry. I'm not sure if I understand your question.

Sorry. I don't quite understand your question.

Let me make sure I understand. You mean...? (or "You're saying...")

* Repeating or paraphrasing the question is a good way to make sure you understand.

⚠ If necessary, clarify at the beginning of the presentation when questions should be asked. You can say at the beginning of the presentation, "I'll be happy to answer questions at the end of the end of the presentation." This will preempt interruptions and help you stay focused.

Techniques for bad questions and so on...

The questioner is asking something you already answered in your presentation...

- Perhaps I wasn't clear enough in my presentation. (Then repeat the information.)
- As I mentioned earlier... (repeat)

If the question is irrelevant, you don't need to answer it...

- That's an interesting question, but...
- You've raised a good point, but...
- That's really outside my area of expertise.
- That's outside the scope of our research.
- That's not something we've been thinking about.
- I think you've missed my point. [⚠ could be rude]
- Our research has been limited to...

* You can then lead discussion back to your own research: "What we're trying to do is..."

If it's not a real question...

The audience member may begin with...

"Have you thought about....?" / "What about..." / "I'm surprised you didn't mention..."

⚠ Be careful. This looks and sounds like a question, but it may not be expecting you to give an answer.

So you may not need an answer. You can try these responses:

- Thank you for your suggestion.
- That's an interesting point.
- We may look at that in the future.

Long, long, long, long questions

If the questioner is "eating up" a lot of question time with a long question, you can interrupt them. Try these:

- I'm sorry, I'm not sure what your question is exactly?
- Sorry, did you have a question, or are you just making a point?

Questions for the audience

Someone asks you a question, but you feel like they may already have an answer. In that case, you can actually say to them:

- "What do YOU think?"
- "Do you have some thoughts on that yourself?"

⚠ Be careful. They may think you're asking this to avoid answering. If that's the case, say:

- “I’ve been wondering about that myself. What do YOU think?”
- “I have my own answer, but firstly, what do YOU think?”

You can ask for information, research references:

- “Do you have any recommendations?”

If you have a problem with your research, this is the time to ask directly...

- “Do you have any ideas as to how we can solve this problem?”

On the Spot: Handling the Q&A

Shiri Noy and Kathleen Oberlin, Indiana University

Some types of questioners to think about...

The Praisers. These benign audience members will compliment your research and often enjoy presenting focused elaborations on some aspect of your presentation. It's best to gratefully acknowledge a Praiser's input, and perhaps use his question as a platform to further elaborate on your research

The Tangentialists. These conference-goers, familiar to us all, have quite a bit to say; however, it is usually only peripherally related to your research. And, like Praisers, Tangentialists often prefer to pontificate rather than ask questions. Your challenge is to acknowledge what they're saying without brushing them off or letting them derail the conversation or take the focus off your research. In most disciplines, interrupting a question asker is considered a faux pas, so you must nod politely until they are (finally) done. But it is equally important to not let them interrupt you while you're responding, in order to prevent another long exchange.

The Interrupters. If someone in the audience repeatedly interrupts your talk, politely ask them to hold their questions until you're done, and indicate that you may touch upon their point in the process. A caveat: In some disciplines (for example, economics), interruptions during the presentation are the norm rather than the exception, and presenters are expected to answer—sometimes at length—questions as they come up. Such interruptions are not necessarily intended negatively (and can, in fact, indicate extreme interest), but nonetheless, allowing one audience member to monopolize the conversation can distract you and your audience. Stand your ground: Wait for the speaker to pause, then politely and firmly interrupt by responding to his or her most relevant question. Conclude by asking, "Have I addressed your question?" If all else fails and they continue interrupting, try suggesting that the two of you meet later for a one-on-one conversation in order to allow time for others to ask questions

The Piggybackers. Piggybackers intervene as soon as someone else finishes a question, but before you've had a chance to answer. When responding to Piggybackers' questions, it's best to deal with both the original question and the follow-up version. Make eye contact with each questioner in turn

The Technicalists. Technicalists are highly focused on a particular piece of your research, usually a methodological issue or theoretical approach. They are often content with a thoughtful response, whether they agree with your approach or not, but occasionally they will be interested in a debate. Technicalists may be the most intimidating type of audience member, but, thankfully, preparation to handle their questions is straightforward. Of course, no one can anticipate every methodological or theoretical concern, but that's OK: The goal of presentations is to learn from others what the holes in your research are, and receive constructive feedback to fill them. Still, knowing your area, data, and topic cold are essential. Many presenters find it helpful to have additional materials—extra slides, tables, graphics, handouts—that they can refer to for such questions.

Being a Good Audience Member

Before you ask a question or make a comment, ask yourself WHY you're doing that. Remember that this is an important time for the speaker to get feedback and ideas. Of course, it's great to contribute, and to benefit from getting answers to your questions; just make sure you're not speaking for the sake of speaking... oh, unless no one else is asking a question.

Compliments

Thank you for your interesting/thought provoking/fascinating presentation.

I found your presentation fascinating.

I enjoyed your presentation (very much).

I think you are doing important/original work.

Didn't Understand

I'm afraid I didn't quite catch/understand what you said about...

Let me see if I understand correctly. You're saying.... Is that right?

I wonder if you could clarify what you were saying about...

I wonder if you could give me a (concrete) example of...

For more Information

Could you elaborate on your point about...

I wonder if you could address the issue of...

What do you think about...? [But make sure it's sufficiently related!]

Implications\Applications

What do you think are the implications of your work?

How do you think your ideas can be applied/used?

A Suggestion

Have you thought about / considered...?

Are you familiar with the work of...?

I can recommend... (research / researcher)

Doubting

I'm not sure about...

I'm not sure I can agree with...

Are you sure that...?

Don't you think that...?

Later Discussion

Would you be able to provide me later with details on/about...?

I wonder if I could talk with you later about...?

Informal Conversations at International Meetings

Introductions

I don't think we've met. I'm... (My name is...)

Nice to meet you...

[introducing another person] Here's someone I'd like you to meet...

This is... [注意: DON'T use "S/he is"... it's considered impolite]

Small Talk [General]

Where are you from?

How long have you lived there?

Have you been to...?

How long is the flight/trip from... [their home]

Where are you staying?

Will you have time to do any sightseeing?

Are you returning home straight after the conference?

What ... do you recommend...? [places, restaurants...]

What do you think of the conference so far?

Do you like the food? (What do you think of the catering?)

Are you giving a paper? That sounds interesting. I'll try to attend if I can.]

What's your paper on? [topic]

If you're free at [time/day] please come to my presentation. I'd love to hear any ideas you have on the subject.

Have you met...?

Are you familiar with the work by...?

Leaving

There's someone I have to talk to...

Sorry, I have to.... [make an excuse]. It's been nice talking with you.

I'd like to hear more about your research.

Are you free at...?

What about...?

Why don't we...?

Nice chatting with you.

Best of luck with your paper.

I'll see you later.

Model Dialogue

H: Excuse me, I don't think we've met. My name's Hiroki Matsumoto.

E: Nice to meet you. Edith Wharton. "Edith" is fine. Where are you from?

H: I'm from Nagoya University in Japan. And you?

E: I'm from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Have you been there?

H: No, I've been to California twice, and I traveled to Santa Barbara on my way to San Francisco from LA. But I'm afraid I didn't visit the university. I liked California, though. Great weather!

E: Yes, you're right. I don't like this New York weather at all.

H: Have you ever been to Japan?

E: No, but the funny thing is I'll be making my first visit to Tokyo next Spring for a conference. I'm looking forward to it.

H: Oh, I hope you like Tokyo. Will you have time to travel around Japan?

E: I'm hoping to get a week or so free. What do you recommend I do?

H: It depends what kinds of things you like? Are you interested in cultural sites? nature? shopping?

E: A little of everything would be nice.

H: Well, I'd suggest...

E: It sounds fantastic. I think I'm going to love it. Hiroki, are you giving a paper at the conference?

H: Yes, I'm speaking on Wednesday morning.

E: What's it on?

H: I'm talking about my research on the intelligence of bananas. And you?

E: I'm scheduled for Thursday afternoon. The title's "

H: Sounds very interesting. I'll try to be there. Oh, here's someone I'd like you to meet. This is Murasaki Shikibu, who's from Tokyo University. Shikibu, this is Edith, from the University of California, Santa Barbara

S: Nice to meet you.

E: Yes, you too. I was just telling Hiroki I will be in Tokyo next Spring.

S: Oh, really? That's a good time to be there.

H: Excuse me, I've just seen someone I need to talk with. Edith, I hope I have a chance to talk with you later.

E: Yes, I hope so. (Hiroki leaves) So, Shikibu, are you giving a paper?

S: No, I'm not... just listening this time. What's your paper on?

E: Well, it's about...

S: Oh, it looks like the next session is beginning. There's a paper I don't want to miss. But I'd like to hear more about your research. It's kind of related to what I'm doing. I don't suppose you're free at lunchtime tomorrow?

E: Yes, I'd like that. Say about 12? Where shall we meet?

S: How about right here?

E: Fine. I'll see you then, Shikibu.

S: Bye Edith

Presentation Preparation

Checklist Questions

1. How much time is allotted for your presentation? _____ minutes
2. How long is question time? _____ minutes
3. Are the audience likely to be specialists and knowledgeable of your topic? YES / NO
4. What are the likely (English) language levels of your audience? _____
5. What do you think the audience will want from your presentation? _____

6. What do you want to achieve (in concrete terms) by doing this presentation?
 - ① ideal: _____

 - ② minimum: _____

7. What will be the primary message/point/ thesis of your presentation?

8. Do you have sufficient logical/data support to deliver this message? YES / NO
9. What are your greatest anxieties concerning this presentation? _____

10. Do you have a script or plan to write one? YES / NO
11. Will you a) read, b) use extensive notes, c) use minimal notes, or d) speak directly? (circle one)
12. What kind of slide text, images, video (if any) do you expect to use? _____

13. Do you have ideas about slide design? _____
14. Do you plan to have your script/notes/slides proofread? YES / NO
15. How long before presentation day do you expect to complete materials? _____

Presentation Self-Assessment

Title:				
	😊	☹️	?	<i>Comments</i>
* Topic/Content Interesting? New? Suitable for audience? Content depth?				
*Introduction Attention-getting? Background/context given? Clear idea? Prediction? Importance given?				
*Body Structure Logical organization? Clear transitions? Clearly emphasized points? Research support?				
*Conclusion Clear summary? Memorable?				
*Eyes and Face Contact with all members? Friendly?				
*Gestures and Body Hands free & expressive? Relaxed body?				
*Visual Aids Useful? Well designed?				
*Voice Clear? Volume? Variation?				
*Pace/Speed Not too fast or slow? Useful Pauses? No loooong pauses?				
* Question Time				
What aspects do you most want to improve for your next presentation? Why?				
Content	Structure	Visual	Voice	TOTAL
				/

Summary: Key Points to consider...

- Ⓢ A presentation is not a test!
- Ⓢ Consider your speaking aims
- Ⓢ Even academic speaking is persuasion
- Ⓢ Consider your audience
- Ⓢ Structure your presentation around a key point
- Ⓢ Signpost parts and transitions
- Ⓢ Keep it **clear** and simple, even if it's complex
- Ⓢ Keep delivery **clear**, including pronunciation
- Ⓢ Delivery is important: Eyes, face, body language
- Ⓢ Question Time: it's YOUR time
- Ⓢ You don't need to answer bad or non-questions
- Ⓢ Use Presentation aids efficiently for **clarity**