# PRESENTATION SKILLS/TECHNIQUES

## Research Skills C1 & C2 Combined Course Materials

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# What is this book?

This is basically a collection of prints, combining handouts from two courses on presentations for graduate students and researchers run through Mei Writing at Nagoya University. I've added a few pages of explanation to make more sense of the prints and tie things together better. I'm still working on it, and I hope it will improve over time.

# How should I use this book?

However you like! Browse through it or use the Contents page to find what you're especially interested in. Keep it as a reference for when you're preparing a presentation.

If you would like copies of anything or further information, or if you have suggestions on how I can improve the materials in the book, I'd love to hear from you.

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# About Course Aims and Materials

## About the Research Skills C1 and C2 Presentations Courses

### Aims 目的

The combined main aims of these courses include helping students/researchers in any field to:

1. acquire skills in drafting logical, clear and persuasively effective research presentations.
2. develop confidence and competence in presenting and communicating in English in academic contexts.
3. write presentation/abstracts that will be accepted by conference selection committees.
4. design and present effective research poster presentations.

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 and related research 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.

### Learning Materials 教科書

All materials are prepared and provided by the instructor.

While most materials are original products of the instructor, other sources used in class include:

Alley, Michael. *The Craft of Scientific Presentations*. New York: Springer, 2003.

Duarte, Nancy. Slide:ology: *The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations*. Boston: O'Reilly, 2008.

Graff, Gerald and Birkenstein, Cathy. *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. New York: Norton, 2017.

Meyer, Erin. *The Culture Map: Decoding How People Think, Lead and Get Things Done Across Cultures*. New York: Public Affairs Books, 2014.

Reynolds, Garr. *Presentation Zen*. Berkeley: New Riders, 2008.

Reynolds, Garr. *Presentation Zen Design*. Berkeley: New Riders, 2010.

Schwabib, Jonathon, *Better Presentations: A Guide for Scholars, Researchers, and Wonks*. Columbia University Press, 2017.

Wallwork, Adrian. *English for Presentations at International Conferences*. New York: Springer, 2010.

Weissman, Jerry. *Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, 2009.

*Where outside sources are used in the materials that follow, they are cited.

# Contents

## QUESTION TIME (Q&A)

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

## CONFERENCE INTERACTIONS

## CHECKLISTS

# Introduction

# How to Be More Relaxed when Presenting

## 1. Override your primitive brain

Nervousness in public speaking is probably so difficult to control because it doesn't come from the rational part of the mind but from ancient human defence mechanisms in our body. It's likely that our bodily overreaction to the presentation situation comes from deep in our evolutionary past when an individual caveman/ape would feel threatened if he or she was faced with a big group, especially an unfamiliar group. Our body would get ready to either fight or run away—our "fight or flight" response. Our body still thinks that, but it doesn't need to. Keep this simple fact in mind: you are in no physical danger and there is no need for your body's physical overreaction. Researchers rarely physically attack each other! You <u>can</u> cognitively change your feelings.

## 2. Reconsider your relationship with the audience.

You could say that someone might attack you with words. It's possible, but even if that were the case you wouldn't be physically harmed, just embarrassed. No one ever really died of embarrassment.
More importantly, the truth is the audience is not really very interested in you. They are usually much more interested in your ideas than in you personally. Some people in the audience are probably not even interested in your ideas… they're thinking of other things, usually themselves! Most people want to help you, not judge you.

## 3. Consider why you are presenting.

There are various reasons to present about your research. You may want to impress people so that they will help you in some way in the future. But most often we are presenting in order to get useful feedback from the audience. Sure, compliments are nice—"Great presentation!"—but they're actually not very important. What you want is the feedback, because this can help make your research stronger or develop it further. In fact, negative feedback can be more helpful in a practical sense than the positive because it makes you think more deeply and carefully. So don't worry about getting negative comments. They might hurt you a little, but they won't destroy you.

## 4. You don't need to "perform" for the audience.

Although you are standing in front of the audience like a rock singer, you are not a performer. It's good to keep the audience attentive by presenting well so you can get good feedback, but you're not a paid entertainer. Be yourself as much as possible and talk as if you are talking to people who you respect but who are no better or worse than you.

## 5. Don't focus on language.

Presenting in a second or third language is a much bigger and more frightening task. So do your best to prepare early, get your language checked by a native speaker, rehearse. This will allow you to worry less about language as you present. Actually, if you make minor language mistakes as you speak it's not a big problem so long as people understand you. Remember, the audience is interested in the content; they barely even notice spoken language mistakes.

## 6. Use the nervousness to help you prepare well.

Hours, days, even weeks before presenting you may feel nervous when you think about it. Instead of trying to forget it completely, try to use that nervous energy to work on preparing. Just doing something practical

and constructive will reduce your nervousness and the preparation will make you more competent and confident.

## 7. Use the nervousness to energize communication.
Your shaking hands, your rapid heartbeat… that's energy. You could probably recharge your smartphone with the nervous energy you develop in a 10 minute speech! (I'm kidding.) But you can also use it to move your body, change expression and vary your voice. That is, you can redirect your nervous energy towards dynamic (energetic) communication. Of course, you don't want to overdo it, but generally speaking, movement is good.

## 8. Simplify.
Having too much detail in your presentation is likely to cause time problems, and complicated sentences are just going to make speaking more difficult. So as much as possible, simplify the content, the language, everything. Give the audience what they need to understand as efficiently as possible. This will allow you, and them, to relax.

## 9. Breathe Well.
Don't forget to breathe… deeply… not just before but during your presentation. It's often good to pause while presenting, and when you do, take in some air and let it out slowly. Consider meditation (瞑想) before presenting… even 5 minutes can make a big difference.

## 10. Choose to enjoy it.
New and challenging experiences can cause stress but stress is not always bad. We are often more "alive" at those times. Remember that nothing very terrible can happen. No one ever died from a bad presentation and we may learn more from our own bad presentations than the good ones. So, as much as possible, enjoy telling people about your research. And don't be afraid to laugh, especially at yourself.

# Initial Preparation Issues

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.

## Points to consider at the beginning of your preparation

## 1. Where?

**We need to consider**

➤ the geographical location.
➤ 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.
➤ presentation space and facilities: do they have the equipment and quality you 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 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?
➤ the language background of the audience, both in terms of general language competency and subject-specific vocabulary (jargon).
➤ why the audience is attending your presentation. What are the hoping to get from you?

## 3. What?

We need to consider the message we want to leave with the audience. 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 "main idea" is in order to make sense of the information you are giving them. To be effective in your preparation and efficient in your presentation, 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.

# Do You Need a Presentation Script?

## Why It May Help to 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 <u>checked</u> 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. <u>Reading a script is in most cases not desirable</u>, 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 <u>distributed</u> 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 <u>permanent record</u> of your presentation, which should be 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 <u>FIRST</u>

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 prepared 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 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.

# The Research Cycle and Feedback
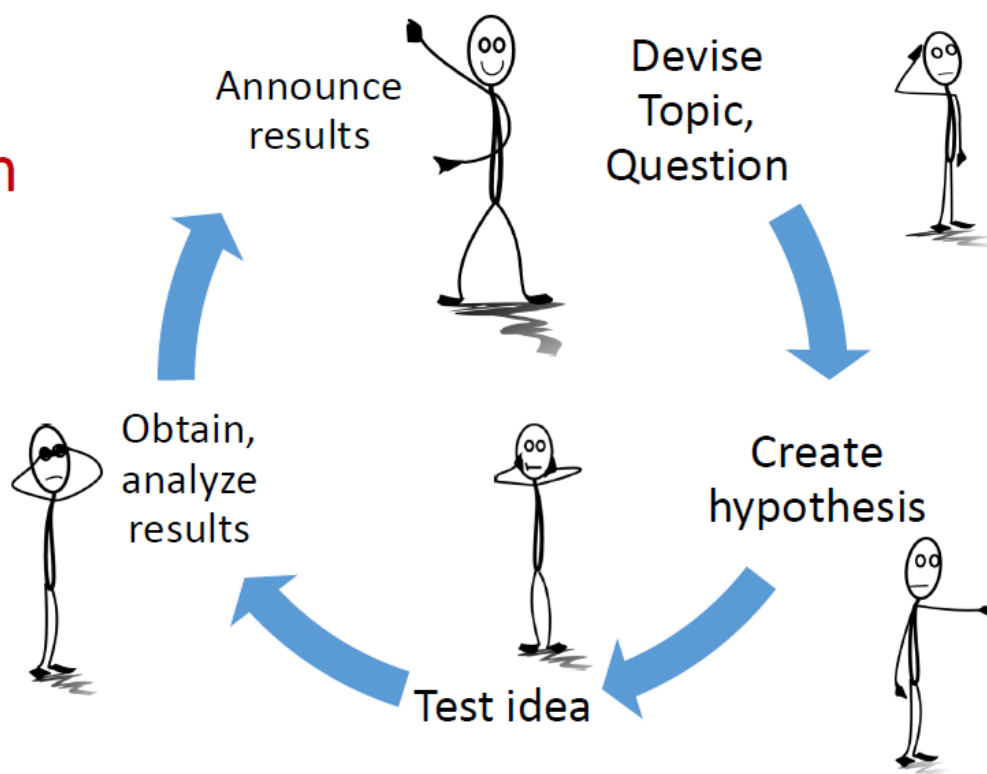


The aims of your presentations will change according to your position in the research cycle. Sure, if you've finished and you have all your research papers accepted for publication you may just be "spreading the word" about your research during the presentation. But it's generally not quite like that.

Firstly, even if you have completed everything, you may be considering your next research project and be looking for ideas and contacts through presenting and meeting other researchers in your field.

Very often, even if you have your research results, you may want to get feedback on them from other knowledgeable people before publishing. The publishing cycle sometimes takes up a lot of time as you have manuscripts rejected or requests made for resubmissons or at least changes. By getting feedback through a presentation first you may be able to save yourself time later by preparing a better manuscript for submisson to publishers.

But before all that, you may be still designing your research, and feedback from others in your field could really help. In a very early presentation, which you are more likely to give within your department or laboratory, you may not even have absolutely decided what your hypothesis or main idea is going to be. Again, your primary reason for doing such presentations is getting useful feedback. So, think about how to organize and present in such a way that you get the best, most useful feedback.

# The Preparation "Feedback Loop"

The research cycle is basically a feedback loop, and you can also use a feedback loop when you're thinking about the process of creating a presentation. You create a draft through notes, maybe a script, and with slides. You try it to see if it works by showing or demonstrating it to your colleagues, or at least by rehearsing. You get feedback and/or review personally what would make the presentation better, clearer, then you adjust it and try it again, just like running an experiment.

Try    Review

Adjust
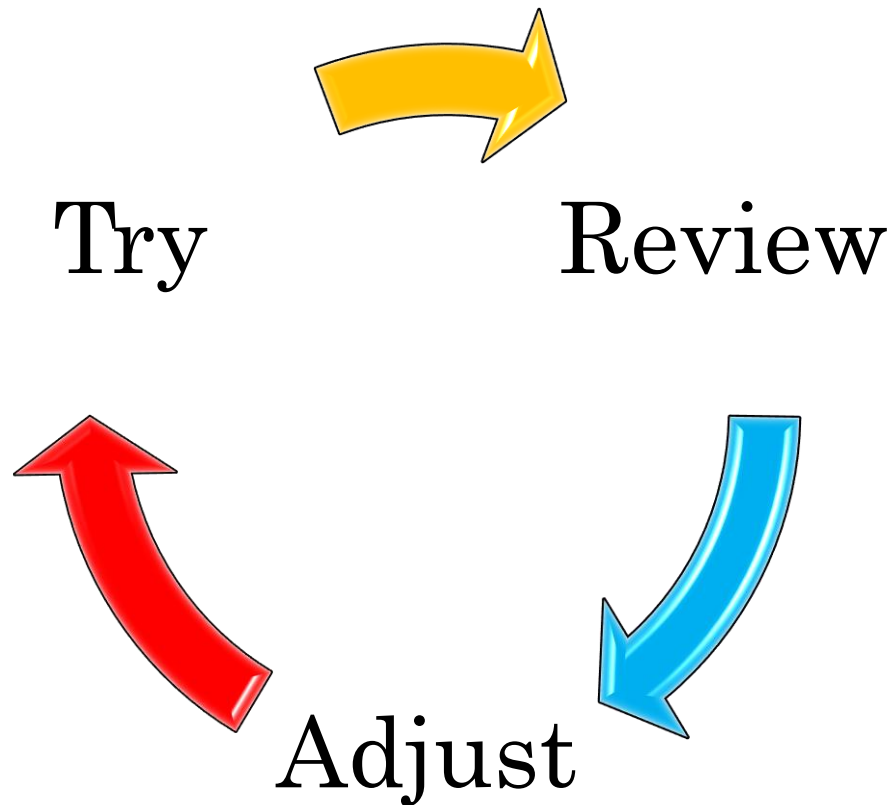
**So, begin preparing and testing your presentation as early as possible. The more feedback you get the better the presentation will be. And you can't do that very well if you're still working on the presentation on the airplane going to the conference. So it's simple…**

# Begin Preparing Early!

# Consider Different Cultural Communication Styles when Presenting

When you present in an international context, it's often best to say what you mean as directly and simply as possible. Here's why…

Anthropologist Edward T. Hall in his book *Beyond Culture* (1976) differentiates between "high context" and "low context" communication. We should be careful in making cultural generalizations, but this may be a useful idea to consider when preparing international presentations because it can help us better understand cultural differences in communication style and thereby adapt ourselves to them when we present our research.

In high context communication, people already share a lot of background, so not so much is explicitly stated: the conversation relies mainly on context (e.g. social context, roles or positions), nonverbal clues (e.g. pauses, silence, tone) and cultural knowledge. In contrast, in low context communication, there is not so much shared background. This kind of communication requires clear, direct messages and a high level of specificity.

The degree of context used in communication varies across cultures. For example, English speaking cultures are quite low context cultures. However, Japan and China, like most Asian cultures, belong to the high context category, where communication partners are expected to be able to comprehend the implicit meaning of the verbal or nonverbal message.

Research suggests that high context communication is more common in cultures which tend to be collectivist, which is to say where the emphasis is upon groups and group reliance. Those cultures may also have a stronger sense of tradition. Such cultures may also have less ethnic or cultural diversity. If we consider each of those three points—group reliance, tradition and ethnic uniformity—then we can see that Japan fits the description of a high context culture. Some things don't need to be said because people understand each other through shared cultural background.

Naturally, low context communication might be expected to be more common in cultures which are more individualistic, somewhat less fixed to tradition, and ethnically diverse. Germany and the United States are the most obvious examples

So, what should we do with this information? Perhaps it can be helpful in cross-cultural exchanges—such as for a Japanese person going to North America for a conference, or vice versa—to know that we may communicate, and interpret meaning, differently. The most important implication is that when presenting at an international level, we should carefully consider how to ensure that even people used to low context communication will understand what we are saying. We can't assume they will guess what we mean if we don't say it. Of course, we don't want to bore people who can guess our intended meaning, but on the whole **in international presentations it is best to present your ideas and support as directly and simply as possible and not rely too much on implicit meaning.**

# Proposals/Abstracts

# Fundamentals of Proposals/Abstracts

Conferences across different countries, different fields of research, and different research organizations of course differ. Consequently, the style and format of presentations and abstracts is not at all uniform. But, there are some general guidelines you can use might use.

## What is in a proposal (abstract)?

An abstract is a very brief (most often between 100-300 words in length, sometimes longer) overview of your research. NEVER go over the word limit, and don't write far too little.

## There are 3 primary functions of writing proposals/abstracts:

1). to give the conference committee a way to select papers

2). to find an audience for your paper… the right audience

3). to clarify your own thinking and presentation structure

## Before you begin, think…

You need to make sure you provide what is required by

a). the organizers in terms of the general theme(s) of the event or session

b). the specific presentation and abstract guidelines

    So, read the conference overview/philosophy and submission instructions carefully.

    * Search online for examples from previous conferences by the same organization.

## Abstract Organization

  ①. WHY you did your research (background, problem, motivation)

  ②. WHAT your research showed, or tried to show, or is trying to show (main idea)

  ③. HOW you did it (method / procedures)

  ④. WHAT support you found (results)

  ⑤. WHAT the results mean (discussion/meaning)

  ⑥. WHAT might be the effects (implications, significance)

**?**

## References

Some conferences don't want references in the abstract, some limit the number of references to be used, often to three. If you use them, you should aim to include references that are current and relevant to the central focus of your paper.

## Title

Aim to keep your title clear and concise. You should ensure that your title reflects the overall aims and themes of the conference. Some authors are able to think of eye-catching, titles but make them so obscure that it is not clear. On the other hand, don't put too much detail in the title. So, try to find a good balance of information, impact and clarity.

## Motivation and Aim

What is your presentation trying to achieve? This needs to be made explicit; if you as the author are not sure, it is unlikely the selection committee or your potential audience will understand. Try to give clear motivation and aim for your research. These are often used by conference delegates to decide which papers will be accepted, so clarity is essential.

## Content

You may refer to some of the key background literature to the paper. Not too much!

If you are doing a research study, briefly summarize the process. A few clear sentences about each element such as sample, methodology, data collection and analysis is all you need. If you have results, state them simply.

At the end of your abstract, refer to the significance, possible impact or your research. A thought-provoking conclusion may help focus attention and influence the selection committee.

## The Writing Approach

Most abstracts are written within one paragraph (sometimes more) and the style should incorporate the Four C's of abstract writing. According to UC Regents (2006) it should be:

◆ Complete - covering the major points of your research.
◆ Concise – containing no excess wordiness or unnecessary information.
◆ Clear – being readable, well-organized, not too much jargon, no errrors
◆ Cohesive – flowing smoothly between the parts

*Try to get feedback from someone before you submit. If you're not a native speaker of the language, you definitely need a native-speaker check.

# Proposal/Abstract Examples

## The Positive Effects of Banana Consumption on Creative Intelligence

**North American Society of Nutritionists Annual Congress, San Francisco 2013**
**(* Sentences are separated here for clarity)**

① There is growing public interest in the influence of nutrition on the brain. Doraemon Laboratories suggested in 2012 that bananas may improve certain mental functions, but no credible investigation of the effects of banana consumption specifically on creativity have formerly been done. (Background)

② This paper is a report on research we have undertaken in order to assess the impact upon creative intelligence of eating bananas. (Aim)

③ The present study used Stanislavsky's Creativity Test to compare a control group of 80 university students with a similar group asked to eat five bananas each day over a three month period. (Method)

④ The latter group's results on the creativity test at the end of the period were on average 17% above those of the control group. (Results)

⑤ This suggests enhancement of creativity through high levels of regular banana eating. (Meaning)

⑥ It is expected that these results, if they can be reliably duplicated, will have a dramatic impact on food science and global consumption of bananas. (159 words) (Significance)

## Development, Freedom and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective

**Inglehart, Foa, Peterson and Welzel**
**University of Michigan, Harvard University, Jacobs University**

Until recently, it was widely believed that happiness fluctuates around set points, so that neither individuals nor societies can lastingly increase their happiness, meaning happiness levels of entire societies remain fixed. Our study, however, challenges the idea that happiness levels are basically unchangeable, and suggests that increased freedom is strongly related to improvements in happiness over time. Data from representative national surveys carried out from 1981 to 2007 was compiled and statistically examined. Regression analysis showed that happiness rose in 45 of the 52 countries. We found a positive correlation between happiness and the combined effects of 1) economic development, 2) democratization, and 3) increasing social tolerance. We argue that improvements in those 3 conditions have increased the extent to which people perceive that they have free choice, which in turn has led to higher levels of happiness. This study suggests a need to modify previous assumptions that happiness cannot be substantially changed, and it has clear implications for policymaking in countries around the world. (165 words)

 * Adapted from an actual article published in the journal *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 3:4 (2008)

# A Proposal for <u>Research in Progress</u>

**Suggestions for writing proposals for research in progress:**

- ➢ Spend more time on previous related studies.
- ➢ Give any early findings (pilot studies, etc.)
- ➢ Discuss various <u>possible</u> results and their meaning.
- ➢ Emphasize that any results you get will be useful.
- ➢ Spend more time on value/significance of your question/research.
- ➢ State your intention is to gather suggestions from the audience.

## An Example Proposal for Research in Progress
## Chocolate and the Desire for Romance: a longitudinal study

**Banksia & Sakurai (2013)**

We are currently studying whether eating chocolate acts as a substitute for romantic love. Chocolate contains the chemicals serotonin and phenylethylamine, which are also naturally produced by the human body. Various studies (Atkins 2001, Ng 2008) have shown that these chemicals are released into the brain during experiences of romantic love or passion, causing raised blood pressure, increased heart rate and feelings of euphoria (幸福感). Ahmed (2008) found that eating chocolate produces the same biological and psychological changes. This raises the question as to whether eating chocolate may reduce a person's need or desire to engage in romantic relationships: if we can receive the positive emotional effect from simply buying chocolate, why bother with the complexities and pain of pursuing romantic love? We are in the second year of a three-year study involving monitoring of 106 single men and 107 single women aged 20-30 in Hawaii. They were divided into three groups: a group asked to refrain from eating chocolate, a group encouraged to eat chocolate regularly and a group given no special instructions. Subjects are asked to report their romantic activities once per month. This presentation provides preliminary data from the study. It is expected that if a correlation is reported, consumers may change their attitudes towards eating chocolate. It is also possible that the increased consumption of chocolate in recent years may help to explain decreased marriage and birth rates across the world. (242 words)

# Building Your Proposal

Think of your own presentation idea. Can you answer these questions?

①. WHY did/will you do this research? (background / significance)

_____

_____

_____

②. WHAT did/will you (try to) prove/conclude? (your idea or hypothesis)

_____

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③. HOW did/will you do it? (method of gathering support for your idea)

_____

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④. What did you (or do you expect to) find? (results)

_____

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⑤. What do/could the results mean? (discussion)

_____

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_____

⑥. WHAT are/will be the implications/significance of your research?

_____

_____

_____

# Proposal Draft

Now, use your outline to write a rough draft of an abstract (about 150 words) that would be:

a). selected by a conference committee

b). likely to attract your target audience


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# Logical Flow

# Standard Presentation Structures

The structure of a research presentation is not absolutely fixed. It depends mostly upon the conventions of your research field and perhaps of the conference you are attending. But even then, there may be room to change if you like.

It may surprise you, but the basic structure of typical presentations in the natural sciences, physical sciences and humanities are not radically different. In the sciences most researchers are familiar with what is called the IMRaD structure, meaning "Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion" for both articles and presentation. Certain areas of the humanities use that same structure. If you are working in a field such as philosophy or literary studies you may write and present in what is sometimes referred to a "discursive" mode: you write or speak a long argument using almost entirely words, no numerical data. In that case, you may still describe your method because you might be using a particular theoretical approach, or maybe you don't need that. As for the results and discussion parts, they may be together... it's all discussion. But apart from that, much of the structure could be quite similar to a presentation in the sciences.
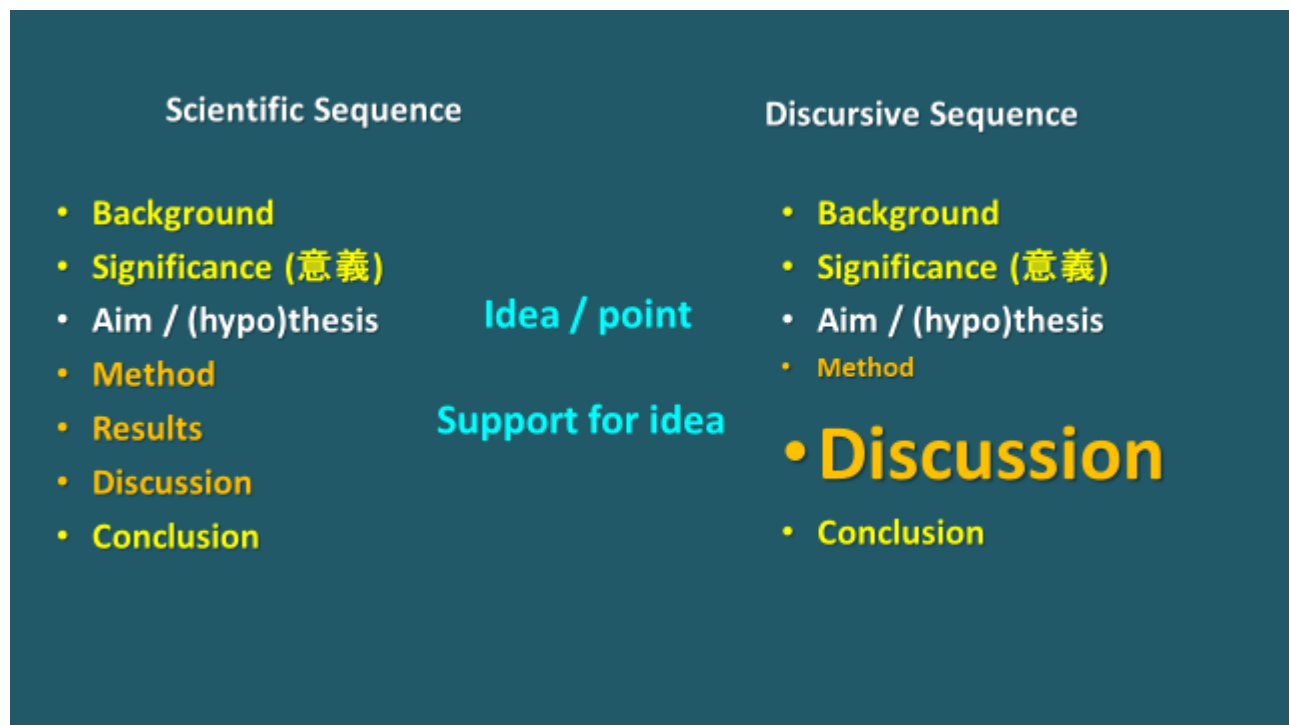


Look at the diagram below, which could be used as a general presentation structure across various fields. In a scientific presentation, supporting parts A, B and C would probably be Method, Results and Discussion. In the humanities you might have any number of sections and any way of organizing them, so long as it has logical flow, coherence.

# Complex ideas, so ... <u>K</u>eep <u>I</u>t <u>S</u>imple, <u>S</u>trong!

## <u>Intro</u>

Background
Significance ←——————— These 2 parts can swap positions
My Main idea is X (Thesis Statement)
<u>Outline</u> (箇条書き): "I will discuss A, then B, then C"

## <u>Body (Support/Evidence)</u>

Supporting Part A ←——— You can add more Background detail here if you want
Supporting Part B
Supporting Part C

## <u>Conclusion</u>

Summarize A, B and C ←———
My main idea has been X ←——— These 2 parts can swap positions
So... (final comment... future)

## プレゼンの基本構成

### 導入(Introduction)

- 背景知識
- このプレゼンを行う意義 ←——— 順序交換可能
- 自分の主張
- アウトライン(これからの内容を箇条書きで)

### 本論（Body）

- 根拠づけ1 ←———
- 根拠づけ2 本論の前に、もう一度背景知識を話してもよい
- 根拠づけ3,4,5…

### 結論（Conclusion）

- 本論(Body)をもう一度短くまとめる ←——— 順序交換可能
- 自分の主張をもう一度繰り返す
- このプレゼンを行う意義
- 締めのコメント、未来への展望

**\* Again, keep in mind, this is just a basic model. You don't want to confuse your audience by having a weirdly different structure, but there may be occasions where it is effective to do so. Don't completely reject the idea.**

# Have a Main Idea, a Thesis

As mentioned elsewhere, the organization of your presentation depends on your aims and especially where you are in the research cycle when you present. Let's begin with the easiest situation: you've completed your research and have already published or you're about to do so. You're basically presenting in order to "spread the word." So what is the word you're going to spread? It should be a thesis statement.

A thesis statement is basically saying what the main point of your research is. It requires you to think hard to express as briefly and simply as possible what it is you are saying based on your research. Ideally, it would be good to say this in a single sentence and have that statement on a single slide by itself so it's clear to the audience what it is and how important it is. In fact, that statement should provide the point around which your entire presentation is structured. As in an article (論文), everything in your presentation is devoted to supporting that statement.

The great thing about a thesis statement is that it give your presentation a focus and motivation, both for you—you want to demonstrate why the idea is a good one—and for the audience—they now know what you are trying to prove, so it helps them make sense of the information you're giving them.

Having a thesis statement can make preparation of your presentation much easier. A common problem we have with presentations is that because of the time limit we have to make difficult decisions about what to include and what to cut when editing. Most of us find cutting is the toughest part. We've worked hard to get this information, and we may feel that giving as much detail as possible will impress the audience with our diligence. When you have a clear, precise thesis statement, you can ask yourself this key question when you're editing and trying to decide whether to cut a part: <span style="color:red">Do I need this information in order to support my thesis statement in some way, or is it just incidental data—interesting or impressive, but not necessary? If it doesn't help support your main idea, or at least clarify it, you can probably cut it.</span>

There is another important benefit of a clear thesis statement: it will help you get useful feedback. Because that statement gives the point of your presentation, the audience will tend to give more focused questions or comments. They are more likely to relate to your main idea and not to some minor issue that is not your main concern or interest. Most importantly, the audience will be better able to test your idea in their own mind if they know what it is. This is why it's best to have the thesis statement near the beginning of your presentation where possible.

## What if you're not confident of your idea?

What if you're not at the end of the research cycle, so you don't have an idea, a thesis you're very sure is correct. As you're researching you almost certainly have a rough idea of what you're looking for even if you have no idea whether it's right or not. Good new research has to have a sense of mystery about it... if not, it's probably not new or important research. But as you progress you are heading somewhere. It may be guided by a simple question: Does the sun really revolve around the earth? When Copernicus was doing his research he must have had some doubts about whether the earth was the center of the universe, like most people in his time believed. At some point, somewhere in his mind, the idea must have arisen in his mind that most people were wrong and must of have played with the idea that the sun was the planets were revolving around the sun. He didn't know it for sure, so it wasn't a thesis to begin with, but a possibility, a supposition or hypothesis (前提, 仮定, 仮説). But that guided his research. He could test certain things, look for certain things in order to verify if he was on the right track.

Now, can you build a presentation around a hypothesis, an unverified idea? Absolutely. You just need to be clear with the audience that you haven't proven the idea is correct yet. In that case you need to <span style="color:red">use suitable language, the expressions that show how confident (such as "We strongly believe...") or unsure (such as "It is possible that...") you really are.</span> See the page of expressions for indicating confidence levels and uncertainty in the "Words" section below.

Why state something you're not sure of? Same as with a thesis statement—it gives focus, meaning and motivation to your presentation. So, wherever you can, try to give a clear statement of your idea, and again, give it a slide by itself so it obvious to the audience that this is the central point of your research and your presentation.

## What if you have NO idea?

As mentioned above, most researchers have ideas floating around their minds about what they're going to find. At the very least they have a question or questions, and if you have questions then you probably have possible answers moving around up there in your brain too.

So, if you're very early in your research cycle when you present, at least tell the audience of a question or 2 that you want to answer, and don't be afraid to speculate aloud. Why? Because if you speculate, you're more likely to provoke useful input from the audience.

## A question at the start, an answer at the end?

In some fields, and at some conferences, there is a customary structure in which the presenter, after giving some background, raises one or more research questions. They then present the methods, results and analysis before giving answers.

There are 3 good reasons why you might want to follow the custom:
1. If you structure your presentation differently, you might just confuse people.
2. If you structure your presentation differently, people might think you're weird!
3. Beginning with a question and moving towards an answer creates suspense, like a drama, so it keeps the audience interested.

Personally, I do want to encourage you to confuse an audience, make them think you're strange, or bore them, so I recommend you do what you think is best based on your context, knowledge and experience.

Still, if it is possible to state your thesis or hypothesis in the introduction of your presentation, then I recommend you consider it for the reasons mentioned earlier. Most importantly, it allows the audience to better test your idea if they know what it is exactly from the beginning. The presentation becomes more like a real test than a mystery story. Also, stating your main idea up front is likely to have more impact and this itself may help to get the audience's attention and keep it.

## "I will Introduce..." is not a good start

The phrase "I will introduce..." is often used by Japanese students, in part because the term 紹介, which basically means "introduction," is often used here. In research presentations, even early in the research cycle, I don't recommend using this phrase. Why? Because it basically says, "I'm just going to give you information." It lacks a focus, a purpose and motivation for the audience. In our digitally connected world today, we have too much information. What we need is a good reason to make us decide to commit to listening to or viewing information. Your main idea can do that.

So, of course, avoid saying more than you believe and can support, but have a point. Keep it brief. Emphasize it in your organization and design. And say it.

# Presentation Template

## Intro

Background:_____
_____
_____

Statement of Idea: _____
_____

Significance: _____
_____

Outline (parts): _____


## Body

Support                                                                                    I
_____
_____
_____
_____

Support II
_____
_____
_____
_____

Support III
_____
_____
_____
_____


## Conclusion

_____
Synthesis / Summary: _____
_____

Restate Key Idea:_____
_____

Final Comment: _____
_____

# Reflecting on Your Structure

## 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?
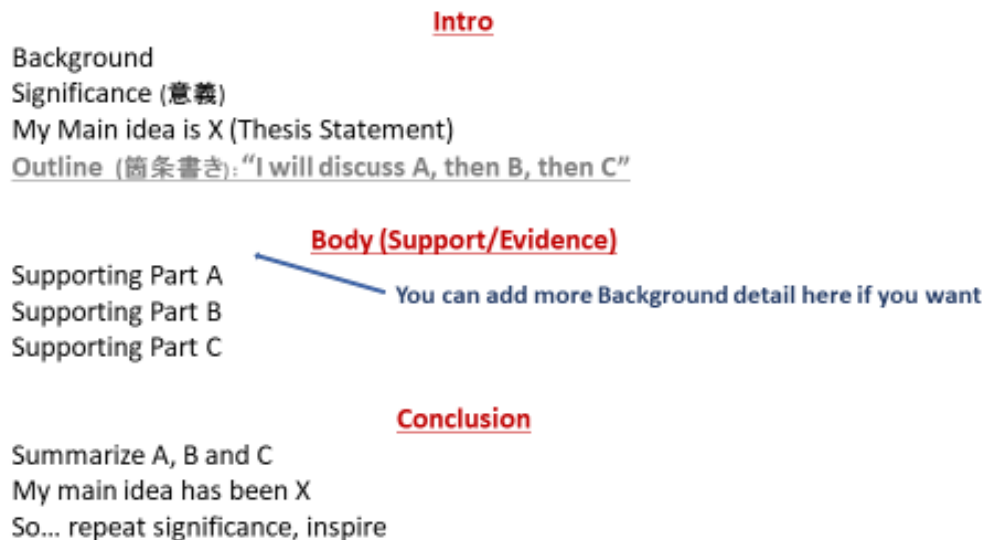
_____
_____

# Too much background? What to do.

If you have not yet done much of your research, you may be worried that most of your presentation will be background. That's OK, but then you may worry that this means your introduction (導入，序論) will be too long and your body （本論) too short.

If you have that worry, then look at the structure diagram below. As it shows, if you have a lot of background, then in the introduction just give enough background that you can then give significance and some kind of main idea (The audience wants that main idea, even if it's not precise, in the intro.... they don't want to wait too long). Then, in the outline (箇条書き), you say "Before discussing my research method, I'd like to give you more detailed background." Now the audience is happy (because they know where you are taking them) and you can spend much more time on background. If your intro "main idea" was not precise, then after that more detailed background in the body you can give a more precise statement of problem and idea or hypothesis.

Most importantly, if you're unsure of anything anytime, contact me! There are always solutions to structure issues.

## Moving some background to the body

### Intro
Background
Significance (意義)
My Main idea is X (Thesis Statement)
Outline (箇条書き): "I will discuss A, then B, then C"

### Body (Support/Evidence)
Supporting Part A
Supporting Part B     You can add more Background detail here if you want
Supporting Part C

### Conclusion
Summarize A, B and C
My main idea has been X
So... repeat significance, inspire

# Why Stating Significance is Important 意義の大切さ

**"Significance" is one of the most important points in a presentation, and yet it is the point that presenters most often miss or misunderstand.**

## What is significance?

It is basically the reason, the motivation, for the <u>audience</u> to listen to you. This is why it's best to state it <u>directly</u> near the <u>beginning</u> of your presentation and probably at the end. It is not the same as "support" for your idea.

There are 2 basic types.

### 1. General significance

This is the importance of your field of study broadly speaking. For example, imagine that you're working in food science and your main idea is "Bananas deliver varied nutritional elements efficiently." General significance might be something like "Bananas are one of the major staple crops internationally." It is not related to your idea specifically. You are more likely to use the general kind of significance when you have a general kind of audience, including people outside your field. These people may not know how important bananas, and banana research are, but an audience at a "Banana Research Symposium" would already know this.

### 2. Specific significance

This is the importance of your actual research, the possible or actual implications. Take as an example the same main idea as above, "Bananas deliver varied nutritional elements efficiently." You could state a significance of this finding is that "Banana imports could be a quick method to address serious and urgent nutrition problems in certain areas." This is an implication related to your specific research.

You could use both of these types of significance and you can have more than one of either. But if that's not suitable or required, you should try to include at least one statement of significance in your presentation, ideally in the introduction in order to motivate the audience and ideally at the end too.

## Why do we often forget to show significance?

1. You don't really know why it's significant: "Someone told me to do it, so I'm doing it." or "I'm interested in it, so I want to talk about it."
> \* Neither of these is a reason why the <u>audience</u> should listen to you.

2. In your lab everyone already knows why it's significant.
> \* Fine, but when you present <u>outside</u> your lab, especially your field, you may need to make it clear.

3. You think it's obvious to anyone, so don't need it: "Even a monkey could guess the significance!"
> \* It might be obvious to you, but it's probably not clear to the audience.

4. You want to be modest.
> \* Modesty is generally a good thing, but here it's not about you, it's about the audience.

5. Your main idea contains significance.
> For example: "The increasing number of bald people is a <u>serious social problem</u>."

**Common forms of significance:**

1. There is a common element that effects many people or environments.
   Main Idea: "We believe regularly eating bananas increases intelligence."
   Significance: "Bananas are one of the <u>most commonly eaten</u> foods around the world."

2. This issue has not been researched/discussed before.
   Main Idea: "We believe regularly eating bananas increases intelligence."
   Significance: "<u>No research has been done</u> on the effects of banana eating upon intelligence."

3. We have limited resources/time/money.
   Main Idea: "We believe regularly eating bananas increases intelligence."
   Significance: "We have <u>limited</u> food production resources, so we need to consider what food we buy carefully."

4. There is a great <u>potential/need for positive change</u>.
   Main Idea: "We believe regularly eating bananas increases creative intelligence."
   Significance:     "Humans are becoming more stupid at an alarming rate."
                        "More intelligent people will probably make a better society.
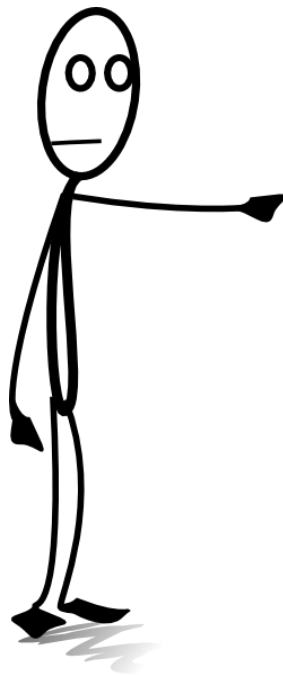
**\*If you are quite early in the research cycle and don't have lots of support for a main idea, you may spend more time discussing significance (along with background, see the "Timing Issues" section).**

# A Clear, Flowing Outline

Outlines are not always needed when presentations are following a standard (scientific) format. However, outlines are important because they give a map to the audience that helps them to follow your presentation throughout. You can keep referring back to this outline if you like to help them stay in touch with your flow.

A problem with outlines is they tend to be boring and just list the points. Try to give logical connections between points to create a smooth flow. See B below.

## A. Generic Outline

So, here's an outline. I'll give some background, followed by the method, results and discussion, then limitations and future studies.

**\* If all presentations at the conference use exactly the same structure, then this outline is not useful.**

## B. Logical Flow Outline

So, here's the flow of my presentation. First, I'd like to explain **why** we began to think there might be a connection between eating bananas and intelligence (Background). Then I'll tell you about the experiment that we did **in order to** see if there really was a connection (Method). Next, I'll show you **why** we think the data we obtained provide strong evidence that bananas do indeed raise intelligence. Then, I'll tell you our hypothesis for **why** bananas might have this positive effect. **To do that**, I'll discuss the nutritional content of bananas (Results, Discussion). \*Finally, I'll look at some limitations in our present study and what we plan to do <u>in order to</u> overcome them.

**\* Try to use phrases that directly state the logical connections between parts.**

# Timing Issues

## Why is Timing Important?

Running out of time is the single biggest and most common destroyer of presentations. Think of how many times you've heard presenters say, "I'm short on time, so I'll have to skip ahead," and then you see them scrolling quickly through slides to get the their conclusion. What a terrible waste, and what a terrible impression of you this conveys to the audience: you are not well prepared, not well organized.

## Flowing Through Time
### How long should you spend on each part of your presentation?

There are no hard and fixed rules about how long each part of your presentation should be. The diagram below is just a rough guide. As usual, it depends a lot upon the context, such as how much the audience knows about your research field.

If you are speaking to an audience where many people are outside your specific area you'll need to spend a little more time on background to help them understand what you're doing and explain key terms.

If you are early in your research cycle and don't have results or analysis, then you will need to spend more time on background, and also on significance.

The most important thing is to get to your statement of idea, or at least a research question, quite quickly so the audience is focused and motivated. So, if you have a lot of background to talk about, give general background briefly in the introduction and then return to more detailed background from the beginning of the body of your presentation.
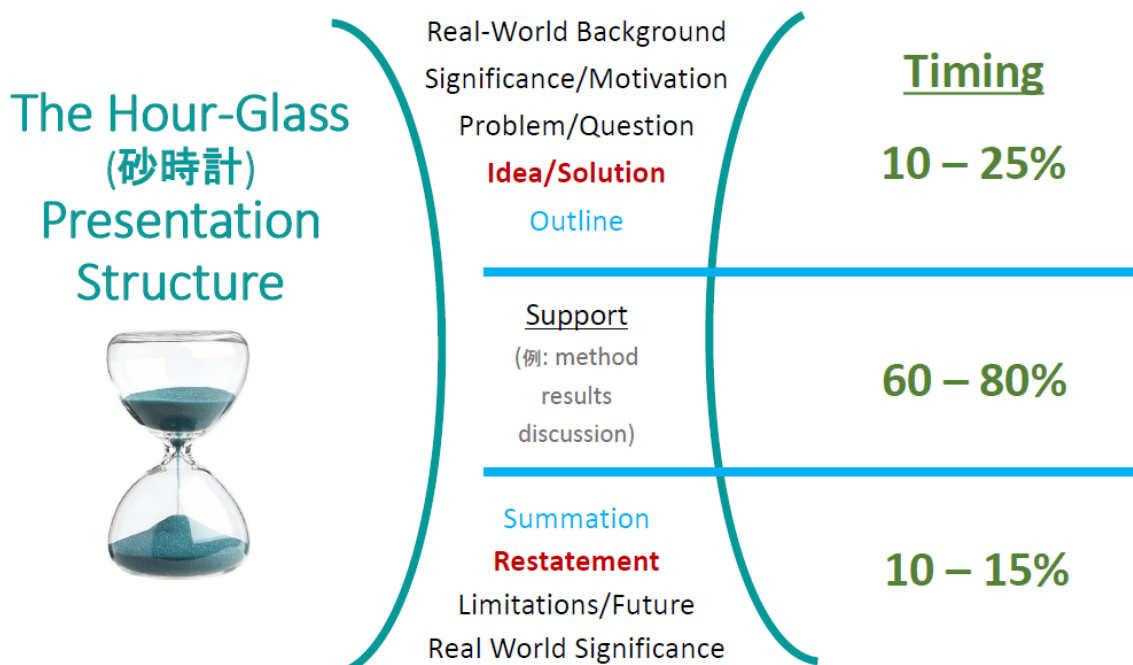
# Signal to Noise Ratio

Signal to Noise Ratio is a term used most often in science and engineering. It compares the level of a desired signal to the level of background noise that is produced in a transmission... when using an antenna, for example.

But SNR is also a really useful concept to keep in mind when preparing a presentation. The signal is your main point and the support for that. The "noise" is information that doesn't serve the main purpose... it just take up precious time in your presentation and space on your slides. Here's the scientific formula for SNR:

$$\text{SNR} = \frac{P_{\text{signal}}}{P_{\text{noise}}}$$

**P = Power**

This formula works perfectly for presentations. The more noise (extra information) you have in a presentation, the more difficult it is for the audience to hear and see your main point. This means that the power (effectiveness) of your presentation is reduced. So...

Think of what the audience is experiencing.

You should try to make your entire presentation feel like this...

# Don't "Dump Data"!

Data dumping is another term used in different fields. It's often used in computing to refer to moving a lot of data from one system or location to another. In the context of research presentations it means throwing a lot of information at the audience to impress them, and it is very common because many researchers are anxious about impressing their audience.

This doesn't mean data itself is bad. Of course, it's good to have a lot of data to support your research idea. But presentations are communication. There is limited time for this communication and the audience is listening to many other presentations apart from yours in a short period, so both you and your audience are under pressure. Data dumping reduces SNR and therefore reduces the power of your presentation.

Here's what a famous presentation expert, Jerry Weissman writes about this:

"The audiences to these Data Dumps are hapless victims. But sometimes the victims rebel. 'And your point is?' and 'So what?' are the all-too-common anguished interruptions of audiences besieged and overwhelmed by torrents of excessive words and slides."

So, yes get all the data you can for your research. But your presentation is a different matter. You need to make important and difficult decisions about what is too much for the audience to absorb, what will just be noise, and so what should not be included.

**Why do researchers often dump data in presentations?** The main reason may be lack of confidence. The data dump is being used as a wall to try to impress the audience and so to protect the speaker.

**Why don't data dumps impress audiences?** Because most audience members are intelligent and have seen a lot of presentations. They know the difference between useful supporting information and data that is just being used as an annoying protective wall.

**How to show your thoroughness?** If you want to show that you have thorough research to support your idea, consider ways of showing this without creating verbal and visual noise. For instance...

➢ Tell the audience you have obtained X number of data points.

➢ Offer to show the audience more data in the Q&A or after.

➢ Make handouts including the detailed data for distribution.

**\* Never <u>decorate</u> slides with data.**

# Words
役立つフレーズ・表現

# Language Issues: Choosing your Words

## 基本ガイドライン

### Keep it Clear　とにかく簡潔、明確に

- One sentence, one idea
  １文に１メッセージ。詰め込まない！
- Reduce pronoun use
  代名詞はなるべく使わない
- Avoid jargon
  専門用語も控える
- Define simply any technical terms (use slides for terms/translations if useful)
  難解な語彙は、簡単に解説/ 言い換え/ 翻訳
- Use images to support explanations
  図表や写真も取り入れて
- Use concrete (rather than abstract) nouns
  抽象名詞よりも物質名詞
- Vary sentence length
  短い文と長めの文を交互に
- Simplify grammar of sentences
  文は短く、簡潔に
- Cut useless details, and say "This is a very simplified description/illustration."
  詳細は省く。「これはあくまで概要です」とことわればよい。
- Don't need it? Ditch it.
  なくてもよいなら言わない
- Tell a story
  エピソードを紹介
- Active over passive form
  受動態より能動態
- Verbs over nouns
  名詞より動詞
- Don't be afraid to use "I/we" in some circumstances if it is clearer.
  一人称（「私は」「我々は」）を使うのもよし
- Use regular vocabulary as far as possible
  できるだけ日常語で
- Use spoken grammar, sentence length
  カタすぎない自然な言葉で、長すぎない文
- Emote naturally and describe emotional responses occasionally if it helps
  オーバーアクションはしない。が、部分的に感情をこめて話すのも。

# If possible, make it a little personal  自己アピールで面白く

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

<div align="center">上手いプレゼンの秘訣は、対話。聴衆に語りかけるように。</div>

**3 Basic Levels of Formality** プレゼンの３スタイル

1. Formal　形式的、カタめの雰囲気。

2. Neutral/relatively informal　少しくだけて、親しみやすく。

3. Very Informal　かなりくだけた調子。

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

　　一般的には、少しくだけたスタイルが好まれる。

\* Reference: Adrian Wallwork, *English for Presentations at International Conferences* (2010).

# Scientific language is becoming less formal

Scientists, and biologists in particular, are writing their papers in a less formal style.

Blogs and social media may encourage authors to write it as they say it, but much scholarly and scientific prose is simply not designed for human ears. Academic writing is code, with freedom of expression and emotional range curtailed in favor of explicit meaning and a necessary lack of ambiguity.

But, do the academics of the Internet age still communicate as formally as their colleagues did in the 1960s? Analysis published online in the journal *English for Specific Purposes* looked at the language of academic papers selected at random from several high-impact journals published across a range of disciplines in 1965, 1985 and 2015 (K. Hyland and F. Jiang *Engl. Specif. Purp.* http://doi.org/bssn; 2017). It showed that academic publishing in applied linguistics and sociology has become slightly more formal [perhaps because those fields are anxious to seem "scientifically objective"]. But, in contrast, **the number of informal features included in papers in the major electrical-engineering journals went up by 9% over the 40 years. In biology journals, informal language increased by 24%, dominated by a threefold increase in words such as 'I' and 'we.'**

Personal pronouns have traditionally been frowned on in academic texts, with many guidelines to help novice writers avoid them, chief of which is the use of the passive voice (so we would not write "we saw something" but rather "it was seen"). The passive voice had been encouraged in scholarly prose because it introduces distance between the research data and the researcher, and between the writer and reader. This suggests detached objectivity in observations and conclusions. It just feels more scientific.

However, in biology and some engineering this is changing. One explanation for the rise in informality is that as the passive voice becomes less fashionable, one obvious way to restructure sentences is to reach for a personal pronoun.

So why change to less formality? Perhaps because active voice is more direct and easier to read, and because it has more impact. (Why have linguistics and sociology become slightly more *formal*? Perhaps because they worry that their field is not respected as "real science," so they feel the need to project a more "scientific tone.")

This has useful implications for presentations, which have generally been less formal than written research articles anyway, since clear efficient communication is even more important in spoken expression (with limited time), and because it's slightly ridiculous to use impersonal formal language to pretend that 'I' do not exist, when I am standing in front of the audience.

# Basic Transition Phrases 基本フレーズ

| | |
|---|---|
| ▶**Starting your presentation**<br>　冒頭の挨拶 | • Good morning/good afternoon.<br>• To begin, I'd like to…<br>• Let me start with some brief background. |
| ▶**Why you are giving the presentation**<br>　目的 | • My main point is…<br>• My purpose/aim/objective is to …<br>•This is important because … |
| ▶**Outline**<br>　全体の流れ | •There are … parts in my presentation…<br>•I'll proceed through … parts…<br>　　•firstly/secondly/next/finally, I'll discuss/look at<br>•The main points/issues I will touch on are… |
| ▶**Introducing the first point**<br>　第一項目に入る | • Let's/Let me start/begin with …<br>• So, first I'd like to … |
| ▶**Showing graphics, slides etc.**<br>　画像など、視覚情報を提示 | • I'd like to illustrate this by showing you…<br>• Look at this.<br>• As you can see in this image… |
| ▶**Ending a point/section**<br>　小まとめ | • So, that's…<br>• So much for … |
| ▶**Moving on to the next point/section**<br>　第二項目へ | • Now let me/let's move on to …<br>• Now I'd like to look at … |
| ▶**Logical connectors**<br>　理由づけ（〜を調べるために…をした） | •Let me explain why/how we did this.<br>•This is why…<br>• For that reason… |
| ▶**Giving more details**<br>　詳細を加える | • I'd like to expand on this aspect/problem/point.<br>• Let me elaborate on that.<br>• Let's look at this in a little more detail. |
| ▶**Referring to a later topic**<br>　のちに述べる内容についてふれておく | •I'll come back (return) to this point later … |
| ▶**Referring back to an earlier point**<br>　すでに述べたことに再び言及 | • Let me go back to what I said earlier about …<br>• You may recall I said earlier… |

| | |
|---|---|
| **▶Summarizing argument, repeating main point**<br><br>　主張をまとめ、要点を強調 | • So let me recap the main points of my presentation:<br><br> • I'd　now like to sum up the main points which were:<br> - first I covered… , then I talked about… , finally, I…<br>• The main point I've tried to make is … |
| **▶Conclusion**<br>　結論 | • Let me conclude by saying that / quoting …<br><br>• Let me stress how important this is.<br>• In conclusion, let me leave you with this thought: … |
| **▶Questions**<br>　質疑応答 | • Finally, I'll be happy to answer your questions.<br>• Do you have any questions or comments? |

# Useful Phrases for Presentation Flow
# 便利なフレーズ

## 1: Introductions 導入、序論

**Introducing yourself, institution/department**

自己紹介、所属する学部・研究科の紹介

- Hi. Thanks for coming ...
- I am a student/researcher/technician at ...
- I am part of a team of 20 researchers and our funding comes from...
- Our research is being carried out with the collaboration of the University of ...


**Giving the situation of your research**

研究の現段階を説明

- What I am going to present is actually still only in its early stages, but...
- We are already at a quite advanced stage of the research.
- Our research, which we have just finished, is actually part of a wider project involving ...


**Giving a general aim**

In this presentation I am going to/I would like to/I will

- discuss some findings
- examine/analyze/bring to your attention...
- review/discuss/describe/argue that...
- give an analysis of/explore the meaning of
- prove to you that ...


**Outlining your flow (traditional)**

流れをざっと説明（オーソドックスな形式）

- I will begin by giving you an overview of / background on...
- Then I will move on to...
- After that I will deal with ... And I will conclude with ...


**Outlining your flow (less formal)**

流れをざっと説明（カジュアルなスタイル）

- First, I'll be looking at X.
- Then we'll be looking at Y/Then, we'll focus on Y.
- And finally I'm going to take you through Z.
- So, let's begin by looking at X.

**Explaining your focus (informal)**

着眼点を説明

- The main focus will be on ...
- I've chosen to focus on X because...
- What I think, well what I hope, you will find interesting is ...
- I'm NOT going to cover P and Q, I'm just going to ...

**Showing Significance (Importance) and Enthusiasm**

研究の価値・重要性を強調

- This is an area that has been really neglected
- This is important because
- I think this has implications for ...
- This could make a useful contribution to...
- What we've found is really interesting.
- I think we have found a radically new solution for...
- I think we have found a truly innovative approach to...
- I think we have found a novel way to...
- We are excited about our results because...

**Referring to extra supporting material (including handouts)**

補足資料（配布するレジュメを含む）に言及

- I've prepared a handout on this, which I will give you at the end.
- Details can also be found on our website. The URL is on the handout.
-

# 2: Transitions つなぎの言葉

**Moving on to the main body of the presentation**

はじめの挨拶から本論へ

- Okay, so let me start by looking at ...
- So first I'd like to give you a bit of background. So why did we undertake this research? Well, ... So what were our main objectives? Well, ...

**Direct transition**

トピックを変えるとき

- Let me now move onto the question of ...
- This brings me to my next point ...
- Next I would like to examine ...
- Now I'd like to show you B. // Now I'd like to talk about B.
- Okay, let's move on to B.

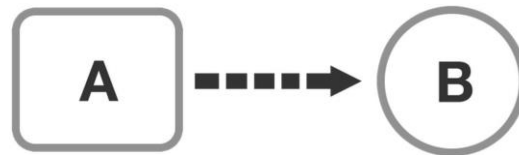**Introducing a new element or topic**

新たなトピック**/** 要点を紹介

- With regard to X ...
- As far as X is concerned …
- Regarding X ...

**Showing where you are in the flow**

プレゼンの流れを再確認

Okay, so this is where we are.

- So, this is what we've looked at so far.

**Referring to a previous topic to introduce next stage**

次の項目に移る前に前項目をおさらい

- Before moving on to Z, I'd just like to reiterate what I said about Y.
- Okay, so that's all I wanted to say about X and Y. Now let's look at Z.
- Having considered X, let's go on and look at Y.
- We've focused on X, equally important is Y.

**Getting the audience interested in the next stage**

次の項目に移るための前置き

Did you know that you can do X with Y? You didn't, well in the next section of this presentation I'll be telling you how.

## 3. Emphasizing, observing, exemplifying

## 強調、着眼、事例紹介

**Emphasizing a point**

要点を強調

- I must emphasize that ..
- What I want to highlight is …
- At this point I would like to stress that ...
- What I would like you to notice here is ...
- What I would really like you to focus on here is ...
- These are the main points to remember:

- The main argument in favor of/against this is ..
- This is a particularly important point.
- This is worth remembering because …

**Expressing surprise (helps to gain interest)**

意外な事実を興味深く伝える

- To our surprise, we found that …
- We were surprised to find that …
- An unexpected result was …
- Interestingly, we discovered that …

**General Observations**

「一般的にはooと言われていますが…」

- Broadly speaking, we can say that …
- In most cases/In general this is true.
- In very general terms …
- With certain exceptions, this can be seen as …
- For the most part, people are inclined to think that …

**Cause and Effect**

因果関係

- This is because / due to...
- This is a result of ...
- This causes / produces / leads to...

**Giving examples**

事例を挙げる

- Let me give you an example.
- You'll see that this is very similar to ...
- I've got an example of this here.
- I've brought an example of this with me.
- .... for example/for instance...
- There are several examples of this, such as …

## 4. Referring to past or future parts  再び言及、先に言及

**Referring forward**

のちに述べる内容について先にふれておく

- 'll explain this in a moment
- I'll talk about that later.
- As I will show you later ...

**Referring backward**

すでに述べたことに再び言及

- As I said before ...
- Remember I said that ...
- The concept I mentioned earlier ...
- As I mentioned a moment ago ...
- To return to my earlier point ...
- If we go back to this slide ... (showing an earlier slide)

# 5. Discussing results, conclusions 結果・結論

**Very strong affirmations**

立証済みの結果、結論

- These results definitely prove that …
- We are convinced that our results show that ...
- What these results prove is ...

**Tentative affirmations**

推測される結論

- Our results would seem to show that …
- What these findings seem to highlight is …
- I think that these results may indicate that …
- It seems probable from these results that …
- I think it is reasonable to assume that …
- What these results probably mean is ...
- We are assuming that the reason for this discrepancy is ...
- We are presuming that this non-agreement is due to ...
- This may indicate that ...
- A possible explanation is ...
- I believe this is due to ...

**Don't know**

未だ結論に至っていない

- To be honest, we are not exactly sure what these results mean.
- I am not really sure why the results appear to be so contradictory, and I'd be interested to hear what you think.

**Communicating value and benefits**

（研究を行う）意味や価値を見出す

- So, the key benefit is...
- One of the main advantages is...

- We are sure that this will lead to ...
- What I like about this is ...
- The great thing about this is …

# 6. Ending 締めくくり

**Warning audience that presentation is near the end**

終わりに差し掛かったら

Okay, we're very close to the end now, but there are just a couple of important things that I still want to tell you.

**Final summary**

要点をおさらい

- Well that brings me to the end of the presentation. So, just to recap ...
- So let me just go over the main points.

**Pointing to the future**

今後の目標、可能性を示唆

- So, we've still got quite a long way to go. We...
- What we need to do now is ...
- Given these results, it seems to us that the best thing to do now is ...
- A promising area for future research would probably be ...
- What we are planning to do next is ...

**Further information**

補足情報

- I am afraid that I don't have time to go into this in further detail. But you can find more information about it on this website (which is on the back page of your handout)
- If you would like more information on this, then please feel free to email me. My address is on the back page of the handout./My address is in the congress notes.

**Thanking the audience**

「ご清聴ありがとうございました」

- Thanks very much for coming.
- Thank you for your attention.
-

# Giving Nuance 言い方ひとつでニュアンス変わる

Often we avoid saying things in research presentations because we are not 100% sure. In fact, statements about research are almost never 100% certain, but **it is often those speculative statements that are most important and most interesting, and which will help you get useful feedback**. So it's good to say these things… we just need to say them carefully.

## Make it clear it is only your opinion 「個人（私）の意見にすぎませんが...」

I think/feel/believe…

As I see it…

The way I see it…

In my opinion…

It seems to me…

Personally, I think…

I would say that…

## Explain it is too early to be certain, but… 「結論を出すには早すぎますが、推論の域で申しますと...」

It's too early to draw solid conclusions, but…

Based on previous research, we can speculate that…

From what we know, I would predict that…

Early signs suggest that…

While we can't be certain at this stage,…

While it's only speculation at this stage,…

If I were asked to guess, I'd say that…

## Express degrees of certainty 「おそらく○○だと思われますが...」

… is almost certainly…

… is (very) probably…

It is (un)likely that…

I am (very/quite/reasonably/somewhat) confident that…

It might be that…
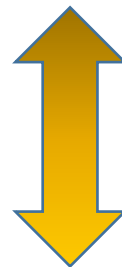
Perhaps/Maybe…

I'm wondering if…

It is conceivable/possible that…

It is not inconceivable/impossible that…

**Strong**

**Soft**

**\* Adapted from: A. Wallwork,** *English for Presentations at International Conferences* **(2010)**

# Delivery

# Simple Delivery Tips
## "Don't survive it, enjoy it"

## Communicate

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
- Flat voice
- Unclear enunciation
- Body too static, tense
- Poor posture
- Standing in front of screen
- Distracting movements

# Silence is your Friend

Speakers tend to worry too much about pausing. If you forget what you're going to say, don't panic, just return to your notes… even your script if necessary. A little silence is not a bad thing. In fact, pausing has positive functions you can use:

- 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: silence is a pleasant break

# Be Your Natural Self

Real professionals think above all about the best way to do the task, not the best way to "look professional." Of course, it's OK to appear professional in your presentation, such as being well prepared, but the important thing is getting the task of presenting done as well as possible. To do that you have to keep the aim of the task in mind. Why are you presenting? To impress people? Maybe a little, but that's not usually the main goal. The main goal is to present your research (not yourself) and get useful feedback. In order to get that feedback you need the audience to understand your presentation and believe it's worthwhile to listen to you.

So, the main point to consider in preparing and delivering your presentation is how to make it understood by most of the audience.

That is, you have to think less about yourself and more about the audience. Imagine your presentation from their point of view. How much or your subject do they know? How much of your vocabulary do they know? It's OK to use technical words if a) your audience will understand them, or b) you explain the words to the audience very clearly. Not thinking about that is careless and unprofessional. Using difficult technical words simply *because* you think it "looks professional" is very unprofessional.

> Adrian Wallwork writes in his book *English for Research Presentations*, "A "professional" presentation is one where you put the audience first. You think about how the audience would most like to receive the information you are giving."

This applies to slide design. A professional presenter thinks about the way an audience receives the information on slides. You need to present information gradually, not all at once, since that can confuse and distract the audience. So don't squeeze lots of information on to slides, but spread it over several slides, and use animations to reveal information gradually on each slide. This helps the audience and keeps them focused on what you're saying.

Never squeeze lots of information onto slides in order to "look professional." This is called "data dumping" and is, again, unprofessional. It shows a lack of real confidence and a lack of professional concern for the effectiveness of your communication.

As for delivery, the way you speak and use body language, keep in mind that you are communicating, not really performing. Because you are a little nervous and because you are communicating to a larger group than in your normal conversation, it is natural to speak louder, gesture and move and around a little more. Just try to stay relaxed enough that you are basically speaking as you would in normal everyday conversation... but project your voice out to the audience a little more. Of course, keep your eyes moving around the audience as you naturally tend to do.

Try not to go the opposite route—that is, to "shut down." Sometimes when we're nervous we close up, stop naturally varying our voice and gesturing, maybe even reducing eye contact. Trying to make yourself "small" to protect yourself is a defensive performance and not effective.

# Practical Ways to Begin with Impact

It is said that audience members decide within the first 30 seconds to 1 minute whether to pay attention to your presentation. Remember, audiences may be attending not just one but many presentations, perhaps all day for several days. In that situation, most of us give only a fraction of our attention to any presentation. As speakers, we want the audience to give us their complete attention in order to give us useful feedback. So how do we secure their interest <u>without acting like a TV Variety Show host</u>? Let's look at what we can do in terms of the content of our presentation.

### 1. Get quickly to the significance and main idea

A problem with presentations for many audience members is that the speaker has no clear main idea or the theme is too narrow for them. They may not be interested immediately because it seems to be unimportant to them or to the world. So do your best to broaden the context and to show how it affects <u>them</u>.

例 *When we talk about paper clips, we are talking about the value of simplicity in invention.*

### 2. Launch suddenly

Beginning with "Hello. My name is X. I am from Y. Today, I'd like to talk to you about Z" is not wrong, but it's not necessarily useful, especially since many people may already know those things: they may be in the program/schedule or on your title slide. Moreover, it sends a message to the audience that this is just another presentation like all the others they've seen. For immediate impact, you can skip that greeting and begin straight away. For example, in some circumstances, it may even be suitable to start by saying your main idea. That has impact.

### 3. Challenge the Status Quo

Say something that doesn't fit with most people's beliefs or expectations. This forces the audience to engage actively, intellectually with your content. While it's good to challenge the audience like this, be careful that you don't simply offend them. Avoid being too aggressive in your statement.

例 *Some people say that in the digital age, the paper clip will die along with paper. This is wrong.*

### 4. Use a Quote

A quote can concentrate the audience's intellectual energy on the content of your presentation. Quotes are generally short but contain deep or significant meaning. They may also be from a person who audience members recognize and can relate to.

例 *Thomas Edison said this in 1927: "The paper clip is a model of great invention: simple, durable, adaptable, endlessly useful."*

### 5. Reveal Striking Data

Numbers are a very direct and simple way to get attention if they are in some way surprising.

例 *Every year humans buy 20,000,000,000 paper clips.*

## 6. Ask a Question

Questions encourage the audience to participate actively. The easiest form to manage is a simple survey question, because it may require simple yes/no responses through raised hands. This allows you to keep control, making sure the audience response doesn't take up valuable time and distract from your own content. Also, even that raising of hands by the audience helps to raise the tension a little. But your question may not even need a response. In that case make it clear to the audience.

例 *Raise your hand if you have paper clips at your office desk.*
   *Raise your hand if you've never used a paper clip.* Of course, no one…

## 7. Use Humor

Humor is obviously a good way to get audience attention, as well as to help them—and yourself—relax. But don't depend too heavily on the success of any humor you use.

例 *I love paperclips. I once used a paperclip to hold my pants together when a pants button suddenly came off at an academic conference.*

## 8. Stimulate Imagination

You can simple ask the audience to imagination a situation which you describe, or you can ask them to imagine something freely. Both of these engage the audience intellectually and perhaps emotionally, but they may take some time so be careful.

例 *Imagine you have papers on your desk and you need to separate these into manageable piles.*
   *Imagine something you can use a paper clip for (apart from holding paper sheets together).*

## 9. Use a Short, Theme-related Story

Telling an interesting background story related to the topic of your presentation. This will help to engage the audience with your content. If the story is about you, the audience may also connect with you personally. But keep it short.

例 *During World War II the Nazis in Norway banned Norwegians from displaying their national culture. What did Norwegians do? They began wearing simple paper clips as a symbol of resistance because it was believed that paper clips were invented in Norway. Actually, they weren't, but…*

# About Using Humor while Presenting

It is not necessary to use humor in presenting. In some cases, with particularly sensitive subjects, it may actually be best if you avoid humor. So, above all, you shouldn't feel pressure to be humorous when you are presenting. Humor doesn't suit everyone and it doesn't suit every situation. Nevertheless, it's true that humor is often valued by audiences and by speakers. Why? There are several reasons

## Why can a little humor help?

1. It is enjoyable. Whenever we can take enjoyment from a task, that task is transformed. It takes on a more positive emotional aspect. It creates a different atmosphere, one in which pleasure is present. This motivates people to participate actively, to listen well.

2. It is relaxing. Because the situation is now not only about work and achieving certain goals but contains a degree of pleasure, nervousness is reduced. This benefits the speaker above all, since the speaker is likely to be the most nervous.

3. It supports a friendly atmosphere. When we share humor, especially when we share laughter, the common enjoyment brings us closer despite cultural, personal, professional differences between us. This is sometimes referred to as "immediacy."* Creating this close atmosphere is especially important when we are sharing ideas which may produce disagreement. The atmosphere created in part by humor and laughter can help us negotiate disagreement more comfortably.

4. It makes the speaker seem more approachable. This will encourage the audience to interact with the speaker not just in question time but after the presentation.

5. It may improve intellectual functioning. Research has emerged suggesting that humor and laughter may help us, as audience members and as speakers, to operate at a higher intellectual level. It seems we tend to think more flexibly and effectively in a humorous atmosphere. We are more alert in a sense. There is now even some biological and neuroscience (brain science) support for this.*

## What kinds of humor work best in presentations?

1. Avoid retelling standard jokes you heard or read somewhere. In the past, it was often said that you should begin a speech or presentation with a joke. These days, that doesn't always work so well.

2. Try to make the humor personal. Virtually anything that makes us feel awkward, embarrassed, even stressed can become humorous if we choose to see it and describe it that way. For example: "On the way to the conference hall this morning, I fell asleep on the train and woke up on the other side of town"; "You don't know how happy I am to be here. I've never been in this country before and I'm not used to cars coming from the right hand side. Honestly, I nearly killed myself crossing the street this morning"; "If I look a little tense, I should tell you it's not nervousness. I'm trying to get over jet lag and just drank three cups of coffee."

3. Deliver the humor as part of your natural speech. If you deliver the humor like a comedy performance, the audience will expect you to make them laugh. If it doesn't work, if they don't laugh, you've just failed and it's obvious that you've failed because of that terrible silence in the room. But if you make any of the humorous observations in the paragraph above and no one laughs, it's not a big problem. You haven't presented yourself as a comedian; you've just described something in your daily life. It's easy to move right along to your presentation content.

4. Don't invest too much time on the humor. Firstly, we usually don't have much time and we don't want to distract the audience from our content. Secondly, the more time you spend on the humor, the more pressure you have to make people laugh. If your humor takes just 10 seconds, no one cares much or even notices if it fails.

5. **Say it because it's funny for YOU.** Ideally, it should be something that you would laugh at yourself even if you were alone. This makes it more natural, and it also reduces the pressure on yourself to make others laugh. So consider how others may react, but don't depend upon them laughing.

6. It's safest to void insulting other people. "Self-deprecating humor" (humor based on our own mistakes or failures [事故軽視]) sometimes works best, for three reasons: 1. It is safer to insult yourself than others; 2. it makes you seem more "human", which may make people more ready to interact with you; 3. you shouldn't do it too much, but willingness to show your own failures can actually be a sign of personal confidence.

**\* Reference:**

Berk, Lee. Humor similar to meditation enhances EEG power spectral density of gamma wave band activity (31-40Hz) and synchrony, *Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) Journal* 28:1 (2014).

Martin, Rod. *The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach*, London: Elsevier, 2007

# The Future of Handouts

As you've surely noticed, we are moving increasingly towards a "paperless society" for environmental and convenience reasons. That raises the issue of the future of those handouts that have been a part of research presentations in most fields for a long time. I'm not a fortune teller, but it would be helpful to consider this for your own future presentations.

Firstly, though, why have handouts existed for so long? We could probably identify 3 main reasons:

1. **Handouts can help you to keep a clear focus in a presentation by allowing you to remove excessive detail.** Of course, key supporting material needs to be in the presentation, but you surely have a lot of data, probably more than you need. So the handouts are a very useful way to show that you have plenty of supporting material without cluttering your presentation.

2. **Handouts give the audience a "take away,"** allowing them to review your material later. It can also keep your presentation in their mind longer and promote future contact.

3. **Handouts may help people better understand your presentation** by allowing the audience to absorb the material at their own speed by reading, looking at diagrams, as you speak. This is especially useful when the audience has less field-specific knowledge and/or language proficiency.

## The downside of handouts

If you give handouts to the audience before a presentation, keep in mind that they may distract the audience from you and your slides. Consequently, even if you give the handouts to improve communication, it may actually have the opposite effect.

So, if your aim in giving handouts is mostly for the audience's <u>future</u> reference, then give them out **after** the presentation. You can still mention that you'll be doing that before or during the presentation so the audience knows they will have them eventually.

注意**: Be careful of giving handouts containing research results that have not been published yet.**

**Avoid** giving handouts **during** a presentation. It's an unnecessary interruption and distraction.

Printed copies of slides may have some benefit to the audience, but if you can make handouts that present the material in a more effective way according to your purpose in having handouts, then do it. For example, if you only want to give supplementary supporting detail or references, then just give those, or if you want the audience to have quotes you are discussing, just print those... in either case, don't use the slide format—it looks a little lazy.

**Consider digital alternatives,** such as offering to send **email or SNS** with that information for later reference. This will allow you to make and sustain contact with people.

Or you can make it possible for the audience **to access material online**. This access could happen even during your presentation since many people have constant online access. But be careful of sending the audience online when you're talking... you're sending them to the "devil's playground"! **And, again, be careful of putting unpublished or copyrighted material online.**

# Slide Design

# Basic Slide Design Issues

## General Design

➢     There is no hard rule about the number of slides in a presentation.
➢     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, or sections of the presentation
➢     Use transition effects carefully

## Text

● Minimize the quantity of text: 1-7-7 is a guideline (1 idea per slide, maximum 7 lines, maximum 7 words per line)
● Ensure font is big enough    (usually over **22 points** in size)
● Avoid fancy text.
● Be careful with UPPERCASE.
● Avoid clutter
● Some color variation can help clarity, but don't overdo it.
● Make sure you have enough contrast between text and background
● Don't have various colors in the background behind text.
● Ensure adequate spacing between letters in text
● Avoid using more than 2 or 3 different fonts on one slide
● It's OK to rotate type a little sometimes
● You don't have to center the text
● Bilingualism on slides is fine, but subordinate one language
● Don't use too many different languages

## Images, Diagrams

♣ Use photos as well as diagrams if it helps to show what you're talking about.
♣ Don't be afraid to use images of humans on your slides. It helps.
♣ Use images such as photos for clarity and impact, not for decoration.
♣ Avoid using more than one or two photographic images per slide.
♣ Make sure the image is big and simple enough for easy viewing
♣ Don't squeeze information, imagery onto slides: "negative (blank/empty) space" is good.
♣ Be careful when cutting, pasting and expanding diagrams or images that you don't lose too much clarity.
♣ 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 of graphs or diagrams.
♣ Avoid having your organization logo on every slide. It's a waste of space.
♣ Full-screen images can have great impact.

- ♣ Make sure font is not "lost" in a background image.
- ♣ "Fading" an image is possible, but often doesn't work.
- ♣ Use text boxes.
- ♣ Use images with large fields of single color.
- ♣ Use "builds" to reveal information gradually.

## Interacting with Slides

- ❖ Use slides only to clarify your point or process so that they serve your speech, not compete with 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.
- ❖ 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 usually 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.
- ❖ Speak before you introduce the slide... don't follow the slides

## Handouts (Prints)

- ✧ Don't let handouts distract from your presentation.
- ✧ Avoid giving out handouts containing slides
- ✧ In general give handouts (with more/different contents) after

\* Rather than make a lot of handouts, you can simply invite interested people to ask you directly or by email for supporting materials

# Further Slide Design Suggestions

**These are not rules... there are no rules... but only suggestions that may help you make clearer, more effective presentations.**

## Preparation Considerations

It's best to build your presentation from a script, or at least notes, then make your slides after. That is, put what you are going to say first, then make the slides after that. This tends to make more logically clear and smoothly flowing presentations.

When preparing slides, be aware that the lighting on your computer screen is probably better than in the room where you will project the slides. So make sure you have sufficient contrast so the slide content can be seen easily.

## Slide Ratios

The default slide shape in newer versions of PowerPoint software use the "Wide-screen" (16:9) format. This is effective, especially where you need to make side-by-side comparisons of data. If you want to change to a more square shape (4:3 ratio) click on the "Design" tab in the top menu and then click on "Slide Size".

## Templates

It's OK to use slide templates offered by the software, but make sure it is suitable.
Avoid clutter.



Avoid using your organization (e.g. lab or university logo) on every slide. It's just clutter (visual noise)

## Text

A page of a book and a slide are different things. Don't design a slide like a page or smartphone screen.

Most importantly, reduce text, use larger images, allow plenty of "negative space" (blank space). This helps the audience understand and creates a "clean, clear" atmosphere.

Always put the main idea of your presentation on a slide… alone. This is important to makes sure the audience is aware of this main point as it is necessary to make sense of your whole presentation. If they miss that, they're likely to be confused.

## Images

Think about taking your own photos related to your research… this will make your research more concrete and "real"… not just abstract ideas or data. Diagrams are fine and often necessary, but photos are great to show context and real-world significance.

Where possible (and without affecting people's privacy) it's good to include humans in photos. Even serious research audiences respond positively to human images: they are more interested and emotionally connected to your content.

## Referencing

Be especially careful with copyright issues if the presentation slides are going to appear online for some reason.

Make sure you give sources for information, whether text or images, but don't allow your referencing to become distracting clutter. For example, don't include a web address on a slide within the presentation. It is better to provide a list of data/quote references (参考)and a separate list of image sources at the **end** of your presentation.

## Colour

Don't be afraid to use colour… carefully. Researchers are sometimes afraid to use colour because it looks like decoration. But, actually, **colour can serve an important function in terms of clarity**. For example, a colour background on a transition slide makes it clear this is a transition. Coloured text, along with text size, in a heading or subheading makes it clear this is separate. That is, you can create separation and hierarchy with colour.

Use your intuition in selecting colours. The audience's attention will be drawn first to bold, solid colours, and usually moves from darker to lighter shades. Red will always draw our attention first, but you need to be careful with that colour because it suggests danger or at least raises tention.

Don't use too many colours. Different shades or tints of the same basic colour may work best.

Remember, don't try to be too subtle, because colour is often diluted (weakened) when front-projected.

# Creating Movement

## Animation

Consider using animation. It is good for:

**Showing processes, flow.** Things move in reality, so it may be useful to show it.

**Controlling audience focus.** That is, by revealing parts gradually, you are controlling the audience's focus and attention. For example, if you show a slide containing several points at once, the audience will try to read them, or may be overwhelmed and lose interest completely. If you show parts one at a time, the audience move along with your speech.

**Keeping the audience's attention.** We are often more interested in things that move.

**Creating immediacy.** When something is moving it places us in the present, the "now".

If you're using graphs, these too can be animated using the presentation software.

Consider using GIF's (animated still images) to show movement and also 3-dimensionality. You can even make these yourself if you have the still images. Consult internet sites on how to make them.

## Visual transitions

Flow is important, but it is also useful for the audience if you visually mark the transitions between parts (for example, from the introduction to the body, or from the method to results). Actually, it provides a little break, which can help maintain audience attention. If you give a logical connection in speech ("So, when we did our experiment, what results did we get? Let's look.") and a visual marker at the same time, the audience easily makes the shift and feels comfortable.

Transitions can be visually marked in various ways. The simplest is to have a label at the top of the slide such as "Results." Then decide if you want to have that label on all slides in the results section. The downside to this is that it creates a little more clutter (visual noise) on all your slides.

Another method—an especially clear one—is to use transition slides. You have a slide with just "Results" written on it, nothing else. It works best to have this in a different colour from the other slides (but the same colour for each transition) because this gives the audience a clear signal.

Also, consider using the "Transitions" (画面切り替え) function in the PowerPoint top menu. These should not be used too much—maybe only for transitions between parts—but they can be very effective if used carefully.

## Video

Consider using video, whether your own or downloaded. It is best to embed the video into your presentation using the presentation software, rather than shifting out of the presentation software into an external file. Trying to connect to the internet during a presentation to show video (from YouTube for example) can be complicated and could cause technical problems.

If you're using video, always check the technology well before your presentation… not at the beginning of a presentation session… that's too late.
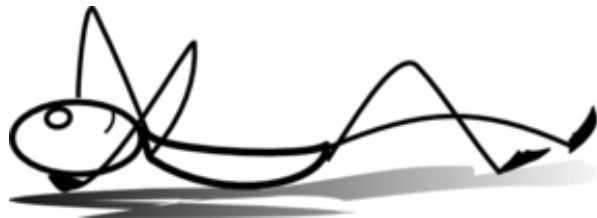
# Question Time

# The Value of Question Time
## ... and why you can relax a little

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 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 maybe 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. 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. **Question Time is not an oral exam.** 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.



## Quick Tips
- Say thank you and/or compliment the questioner if they ask a good question.
- Remain polite at all times... remember it's not an exam or competition.
- Don't focus on language. So long as they understand, most people don't care about grammar mistakes.
- It may be good to move away from the speaker's podium during question time to get a better connection with the audience.
- Don't be afraid of silence. If you need time to think of a good answer, take it.
- Keep good eye contact. Don't be afraid to smile naturally.
- Mostly, just relax and be yourself.

# The Slides in Q&A

## Preparing slides especially for Q&A

Although you can never be sure what questions or comments you will face during Q&A, you can often guess and your prepare slides that will help you explain. And you can have lots of data slides ready in case someone wants more detail. It's easiest to place these at the end of your presentation slide show so you can refer to both the slides in the presentation and the special Q&A slides easily within the same file.



## Setting Up the Screen for the Q&A

You've just finished your presentation and you feel a sense of relief. But now your mind starts thinking about the challenges of question time. But before that, firstly, breathe deeply and relax.

Now, you need to set up the slide show display in the laptop computer so that the audience sees whatever slide you want then to see while you can see all the slides. This is really important because it means the audience doesn't have to watch you scrolling through slides to find the one you want. It's more efficient and looks more professional.
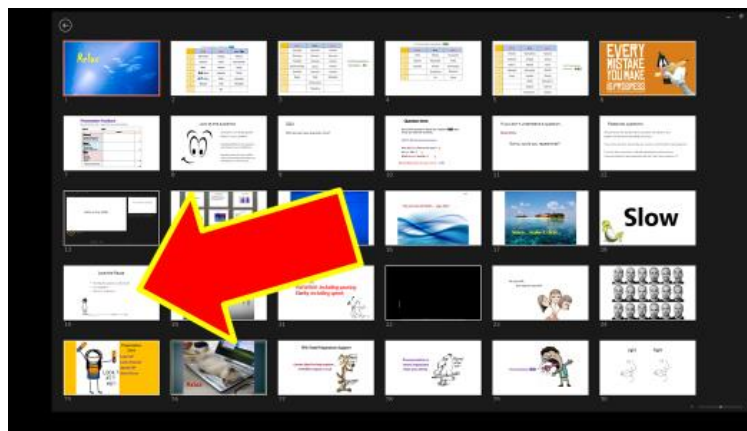
## How to set up the display.

In "presenter view" mode, click or tap the "see all slides" icon below the present screen image on the laptop display.
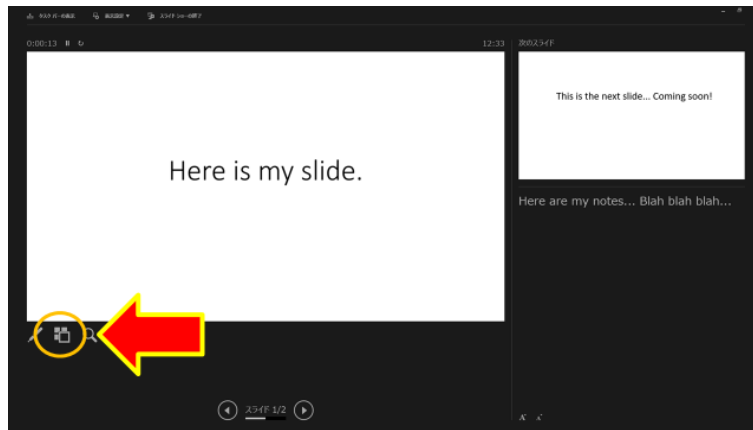


Now the audience can see whatever slide (if any) you want them to look at...



But YOU can see ALL of your slides...



When you need to refer to a specific slide during the Q&A you can now just click on or tap (on a touch screen) the required slide. In short, there is no reason to ever allow the audience to see you scrolling through slides.

# What slide do you want the audience to look at during the Q&A?

This is something you need to deal with long before your presentation, as you're preparing. It's much more important than most people imagine. Let's review some common options for Question Time...

## Showing references:



It may be important to show references at the end, and <u>it may be OK for a little while</u> as you prepare for Q&A, but if you leave them on the screen throughout Q&A it's both distracting and boring. So it's not recommended.

## Future Research:
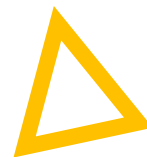


You might leave this on the screen because it's the last slide in your presentation. That's not a good reason to leave it there during Q&A. If you want to orientate discussion during the Q&A towards the future, it's actually quite good. On the other hand, if you want to focus discussion on the research you've just shown, this would be a distraction.

## Acknowledgments:



**Acknowledgements**

This research is supported by a grant in aid from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2018-2022.
Grant Number: J080937368

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Again, you may be obliged to show this at the end of your presentation, you may even want to show it if you really appreciate contributions to your research. It's not terribly distracting, but it's not great for the entire Q&A... kind of boring.

## Appreciation:



*Thank you for your attention!*

It's polite and friendly to say "thank you," so it's OK. But we see it at the end of so many presentations that it doesn't have much meaning. And, again, leaving it on the screen throughout your Q&A isn't really useful.

## Title slide



The Effects upon Intelligence of Regular Banana Consumption

Nishihara Satomi
Saruyama Nutrition Science Lab.
Faculty of Biological Sciences
nishisaru@m.box.nagoya-u.ac.jp

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY

This is not great but it's OK because it keeps the focus on your main idea. It may even be useful as background if someone asks you a question that is not related to your research: you can point to the slide as you explain that what the questioner is asking is not part of your study. It also includes your name and affiliation. It would be good to change the design a little from your actual title slide so it doesn't look like you're being lazy and because you may also want to add your email address (which you shouldn't need on your title slide).

## Related Image



**Human-powered Velocipede**

Matsumoto Hiroshi
Yoshimoto Laboratory

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY

A photographic, or at least a simple illustration, related clearly to the main idea of the presentation can help to keep focus during Q&A. It also helps you to leave a lasting impression in the minds of the audience because we are more likely to remember something if we can actually see it.

## Blank screen

The blank screen is an excellent way to keep the focus on you and your interaction with the audience. It can actually create a sense of immediacy and closeness between you and the audience. If you need the white light of the projector in the darkened room, press the "w" key while in the "presenter view" mode in PowerPoint. If you don't need that light, it's best to switch it off by pressing the "b" key. Now the screen goes dead and it's just humans in the room. You can move around freely and walk in front of the screen. You can easily start the slide show again by pressing the same keys if you need to refer to slides during the Q&A.

注意: Be careful, if you plan to move around during question time. If you walk in front of screen images and colors you will look weird.

# Dealing with Difficult Questions

How do we deal with difficult questions? Prepare well. Anticipate questions by thinking about it yourself... "What are people likely to ask about?"... and asking your colleagues once they have read your presentation script or heard you rehearse your presentation. Once you've got that you can begin preparing your answers:

**1) get extra research (but don't go too far off your topic)**

**2) prepare answers (and get them checked if you're not a native speaker)**

**3) prepare slides, placed at the end of your presentation if they will help you answer**

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 whether the question (if it really is a question) need to be answered or not, and then have the language to politely not answer the question (see the vocabulary help below).

Here's something to keep in mind as you prepare. Question time is often brief but very important for you in order to get useful feedback. So, don't waste that time—and cause stress for yourself—by answering questions unnecessarily. Always be honest, and...

## a. If it's not a question, don't try to answer it.

Audience members often make comments that do not actually require an answer. It may be enough to just to say, "That's useful/interesting" and thank them. You can add more if you like, but you don't have to.

## b. If it's an unrelated question, don't try to answer it.

Those kinds of questions are quite common and very wasteful of your time. Be polite, but if it's not something that relates to what you're researching, then tell them. Apart from wasting time, trying to answer by guessing is likely just to create more problems for you.

## c. If you don't understand the question, don't try to answer it.

**There are 3 likely scenarios:**

**i).** The questioner is not speaking loudly enough. So ask them to speak a little louder, come closer or use a microphone.

**ii).** There is a language problem. This may be because of your listening skills with the language but it could be due to the questioner's weakness in speaking, or a combination of these two. Ask politely for repetition. If that fails ask the person to write it down (and move to another question while they do so), or offer to talk about it later. Try not to lose too much time trying to resolve the problem immediately.

**iii).** You understand the words, but don't get the meaning. If you're confident you might understand, try paraphrasing the question, putting it in other, simpler words, to see if you do understand ("So what you're saying is…"). If you're not confident, be honest about not understanding and invite the questioner to try again. If that fails, go to the "It might be best for us to discuss this after" option.

### d. If you don't know the answer, don't try to answer it.

Maybe you understand the question and it's a good, relevant question. This might be a nightmare for you. But remember it's not an exam. Be honest. If you say, "Sorry, I don't know" no one is going to send you to prison. The worst outcome is likely to be embarrassment. But learn from it, and let the audience know you'll try to find out. And feel free to ask the questioner or the audience as a whole if they have an answer. Again, question time, like research itself, is often about cooperation.

Above all, question time is your time, and it's valuable 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.

# Useful Question Time Phrases

**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.**

# Phrases 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 <u>don't</u> 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 <u>real</u> 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. **<u>So you may not need an answer</u>**. 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 frightening 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 well 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...?

# Poster Presentations

# Make an Effective Poster

You are not a professional designer, I guess, but the fact is design has a big influence on the effectiveness of a poster presentation. So make your decisions carefully. Make a poster you will feel good about standing in front of.

Be aware that people visiting a poster presentation session have to make decisions about which posters to look at, which to ignore. The content is most important, but the design helps to make that content clear, accessible and attractive to them.

Give yourself plenty of time to complete the design, receive feedback, have the language and data checked, and get it printed well before your departure for the conference.

## General

➢ Think of your aim.

➢ Think of your audience.

➢ Focus on the central message, the really new aspect of your research.

➢ Create a visual flow from title through to key conclusions that suits the logical flow.

➢ There is no rule, but in general, flow from top left to bottom right of the poster.

➢ Give the audience what they need, but simplify as much as possible.

➢ Don't be afraid of white space on your poster (10-30% is sometimes recommended).

## Text

1. The title should be easily read at a distance of 3 meters.
2. Avoid using all capital letters in your title (e.g., ~~EFFECT OF BANANAS~~ Effect of Bananas)
3. Avoid including an abstract. Your poster is an abstract
4. Use font sizes that are very comfortable to read.
5. Don't use more text than absolutely necessary. Dense, text-heavy posters frighten audiences away.
6. Some explanatory sentences may be necessary, but avoid long blocks of text as much as possible.
7. Whenever possible, use lists rather than paragraphs of text.
8. Do not add bullets for section headings. Bolded, larger font is sufficient for demarcating sections.
9. The width of text boxes is best around 40 characters (on average, 11 words per line). Lines that are shorter or longer are harder to read quickly.
10. Avoid overuse of acronyms and other abbreviated words.
11. Try to use general, descriptive terms that would make sense to your audience.
12. Consider using bold or colored font to make key points, such as your aim and main conclusion, clear.
13. Avoid using *italicized* font as much as possible. It's difficult to read.

## Color

1. Avoid using dark backgrounds. They make designing difficult.
2. Don't use too many different colors.
3. Ensure strong contrast between colors. Avoid using red or blue with green together.
4. Use color not to decorate but to clarify, such as in making subheadings or key points clear.
5. Don't place various colors behind one area of text.

## Images, Diagrams

1. Give your graphs titles or informative phrases.
2. Format axis labels in "sentence case". (Not in Title Case and NOT IN ALL CAPS) for faster reading.
3. On graphs, use horizontal text on the vertical (Y) axis if possible… it's easier to read
4. Don't display two-dimensional data in 3-D.
5. Make sure that details on graphs and photographs can be comfortably viewed from 2 metres away.
6. Use pictures with high resolution so that it doesn't look pixelated (fuzzy) when printed.
7. Give the source for any image that is not yours.   And only use an image that is fully in public domain.
8. Don't clutter the top of your poster with logos. If you must use them, keep them small, at the bottom.
9. If photos are not clear when printed, paste better versions over them.

# Some other suggestions

1. If you wish to show more images, consider putting them into "booklet" form, which can be attached to the poster.
2. If you have video, consider using an iPad, which might even be attached to your poster
3. If you have important material, consider putting it online, too.
4. If your topic is related to an object, attach the object to your poster if possible.
5. Use tape to add a transparency sheet over a graph or photograph if you want to make non-permanent markings with marker pens while explaining something.
6. If you have information that only some viewers might find interesting, use a "hidden panel" approach. Just print your interesting extras onto your poster, but *cover* the area with a hinged piece of poster board onto which you have glued something else.
7. Have handouts (ideally in color) with full-color, miniature or simpified versions of your poster content on A4 paper to hand to people. You can also make prints with extra data if it serves your purpose.
8. If you have a related article or manuscript, consider preparing copies of these too.

# Presenting YOURSELF

1. Try to combine professionalism with your warm, relaxed, natural self.
2. Try not to refer to notes when explaining your poster.
3. Speak to your <u>viewers</u> as you explain your poster. That is, don't talk to your poster.
4. A poster visitor appreciates a 1 or 2-sentence overview of why your research is significant.
5. If more viewers arrive halfway into your speech, finish the discussion with the earlier arrivals first.
6. Have on hand—but do not force people to take—manuscripts and reprints of your work.
7. Attach a few business cards to your poster.
8. If you must leave your poster (toilet, etc), attach a note saying when you'll return.
9. Attach your photograph near or on your poster so that people can find you more easily when you leave.
10. Perhaps bring a battery-powered lamp if possible, in case your poster location is in a dark area.
11. If a person wants a photograph of your poster, be warned that he or she might post a very high-resolution version of your poster on an Internet site.
12. Consider choosing clothes that match or complement your poster color. Research (see Keegan and Bannister) has shown that your poster will be visited more if you match it.
13. Thank your viewers for visiting.

**\* The above points are based on Colin Purrington's web site on poster design. See below.**

### Recommended web sites dealing with academic poster presentations.

- http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign#templates (Colin Purrington)
- Michael Barton's awesome poster, plus tips (*Joint* Genome Institute!)
- Better Posters (Zen Faulkes @ UTPA)
- Conference posters (Organizing Creativity blog, by Daniel Wessel)
- Creating Effective Poster Presentations (George Hess, Kathryn Tosney, Leon Liegel @ NCSU)
- Design of Scientific Posters (Pennsylvania State University)
- Poster Presentations – Designing Effective Posters (Fred Stoss @ SUNY Buffalo)
- http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/presentations_poster.html
- www.asp.org/education/howto_onPosters.html

# Conference Interactions

# Informal Conversations Phrases

## 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...]

## About the conferene

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.

# Example Informal Conference 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.

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?

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: I look forward to it. Bye for now.

# Checklists

# A Simple Presentation Checklist

## 25 Useful Points

☐ Your presentation contains an idea, not just information.

☐ Your introduction gives enough background on the subject.

☐ Your introduction clearly states the main idea.

☐ Your key terms are clearly defined, explained, translated.

☐ Your introduction gives the audience motivation to listen (significance).

☐ Your introduction includes an outline to help the audience navigate if helpful.

☐ Your introduction is 10-25% of your presentation.

☐ The body of the presentation provides sufficient support for your main idea.

☐ All information in the body is useful in supporting the main idea… no waste.

☐ The presentation flows smoothly, logically using transition phrases, subheading slides.

☐ Your conclusion reviews the key points.

☐ Your conclusion restates the main idea.

☐ Your conclusion restates the significant implications/applications of your idea.

☐ Your conclusion is 10-25% of your presentation.

☐ You provide references (参考) for supporting evidence, data, images.

☐ There is sufficient and clear contrast between text and background.

☐ There is not too much text or imagery on slides.

☐ Text and images on slides are big enough.

☐ You use animation on your slides to avoid "information overload".

☐ There are "real world" images (photos) relating to your research among your slides.

☐ You have prepared slides for question time.

☐ You have had the script/slides checked by a native speaker.

☐ You have checked and practiced pronunciation of all words, especially key words.

☐ You will be able to speak directly to the audience without referring to notes too much.

☐ You are confident that your target audience will understand at least 80% of your presentation.
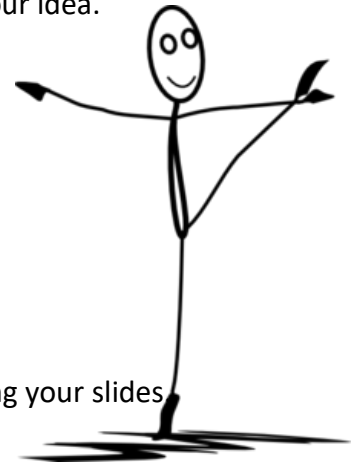
**\* It's possible to not tick some of these boxes… but you should have a good reason for that**

# Presentation Preparation Questions

### As you prepare, ask yourself...

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

How long before presentation day do you expect to complete materials? _____

# Presentation Self-Assessment

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

- Signpost parts and transitions

- Make the presentation flow logically

- Keep it clear and simple, even if it's complex

- Keep delivery clear, including pronunciation

- Delivery is important: eyes, face, body language

- Be professional, Don't ACT like a professional

- Question Time: it's YOUR time to get feedback

- You don't need to answer bad or non-questions

- Use presentation aids efficiently for clarity

# ● ENJOY IT!