



MODULE: PRESENTATION SKILLS – PODIUM

OVERVIEW

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this module, you will be able to:

- [Interpretation] Define categories that can be used to evaluate different types of presentations
- [Interpretation] Identify strategies that can be used to deliver an effective podium presentation
- [Application] Deliver a strong podium presentation on a chosen research article
- [Evaluation] Critique your own presentation and those of your mentee cohorts

Materials for this Module

- TED Talks playlist on public speaking: There are several good talks here that you are encouraged to peruse to gather inspiration and advice:
 - https://www.ted.com/playlists/226/before_public_speaking
- Handout 1: Podium Presentation Rubric
- Handout 2: Presentation Template

Introduction

Presenting or public speaking is something that the majority of people do not enjoy. You have to learn to enjoy it. And the best way to do this is through practice, no matter how painful. There are some key points that can help you improve your presenting skills. Review the list of tips included below. Evaluate your own presentation skills and determine which ones you count as strengths and which ones you can improve.

General Tips:

- Know your audience. What do they know? What would motivate them to learn something new?
- Take your time, don't rush
- Avoid shiftiness, plant your feet, don't sway
- Dress to impress (know the dress code)

Tips for Delivering an Effective Podium Presentation:

- Practice, practice, practice!! Pay attention to filler words (don't use "uhm, ahh, errr, ugggghhhh")
- Practice in front of an audience



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- Know your audience, adjust your language
- Maintain good eye contact
- Don't read slides, use them as prompts
- Avoid gesturing, minimize handwaving, use laser pointer sparingly (balance laser pointer hand with other hand to minimize shaking)
- Avoid serif fonts (use Helvetica, Arial, etc. that do not have "tails")
- Minimize words, avoid sentences, use bullets, phrases
- Use appropriate color scheme
- Reference images, include captions, magnifications or scale bars
- Speak clearly and at a volume that person in back of room can hear
- Investigate room and podium, laser pointer, slide advance ahead of time
- Begin talk with an engaging, conversational sentence – do **NOT** read the title of slide
- Practice tricky words ahead of time – know the words you are presenting; they should be your words
- Include acknowledgement slide
- Adjust font size on graphs, use thick lines, make readable
- Don't overpopulate any one slide with graphs
- Use animation sparingly (avoid fade-ins, fly-ins)
- Be wary of including videos (check them out ahead of time using the actual computer that you will be using for presentation)
- Target 60 seconds or less per slide

Assignment(s) for this Module

Research Article Podium Presentation Activity:

Compose, rehearse, and deliver a strong presentation on a research article you've been studying. Approach it as if the audience is unfamiliar with the research. Consider including the various aspects of the article as an outline for your presentation:

- Goal and Relevance: This information can be found in the abstract. What is the problem, and why is it important to the world?
- Background: What theories, findings, and knowledge already exist? Previous research?
- Method: What was the experimental design? Tests conducted?
- Results and Discussion: Representative data; could be in the form of figures, thoughts, and insights regarding the data.
- Conclusions: Very specific facts, not hypotheses. Implications for further research.
- Acknowledgments: Financial support, contributors to work.

You will deliver your presentation to your mentor and colleagues (as applicable). Use the Presentation Template in Handout 3 to create your PowerPoint presentation. Presentation times should be 7-10 minutes. Send a copy of your PowerPoint presentation to your mentor (or their designee) prior to your next meeting.

Deliverable 1: Document your presentation using Handout 2 as a template (Handout 2).

Five-Minute Reflection:

1. Come up with one question to discuss with your mentor (maybe a concept you are unclear on, something you found interesting, etc.)
2. What information did you feel was the most informative? Least?



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3. Funniest or most ridiculous thing you have seen someone else do in a presentation. Was it distracting or did it improve the talk?
List 3 things you can improve on with respect to presentation skills. List 3 things you feel you do well with respect to presenting.

Deliverable 2: Document your responses to the Five-Minute Reflection.

Mentee Deliverables:

- Deliverable 1: Research Article Podium Presentation (Handout 2).
- Deliverable 2: Responses to the Five-Minute Reflection (Overview).

Discussion with Mentor:

- Discuss presentation layout
- What mentor/ advisor looks for in presentations, specific points they like to point out
- Discussion of Five-Minute Reflections

Summary

- Research article presentations should include the goals, relevance, background, methods, results, discussions, conclusions, and acknowledgements of the experiment or project.
- Know your audience; adapt your delivery based on their backgrounds and experience.
- Practice makes perfect! The more you rehearse, the more confident you will be.

Checklist

Prior to Meeting with Mentor:

- Overview: Review and practice tips on proper presentation technique
- Overview: Watch TED videos going over good and bad habits during presentations
- Handout 2: Presentation Template