



Biotechnology Training Program

Tips for Presentations

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How NOT to Give a Great Presentation

Topics in Advanced Biotechnology
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Step 1

- Sit down at your computer and launch PowerPoint.
- If you have a talk from last year, pull it up and try to cram in a few more slides with new recent data.
- Think about your audience - then tell them a story.
- Get the storyline set before you start creating slides.
- The slides should illustrate, backup and/or reinforce the story you want to tell (~1 slide/min).

Craft the slides around the story,
not the story around the slides!

Slide Design

- Don't skimp on text
 - If you forget what you were going to say, you can always read it.
 - And why bother with a picture when a thousand words will do?
- Keep text to a minimum
- Text is distracting -
 - An audience reads faster than a speaker speaks.
 - Listening to one thing and hearing another reduces assimilation of both.

Slide Design

- Be professional - avoid cartoons, images and schematics
- People are visual learners
 - pictures help recall

Slide Design

- Be professional - use figures as they appear in publications
- Modify or redesign figures for presentations
 - There are no figure legends
 - label lines, bars, lanes (don't use keys)
 - use descriptive labels for axes
 - substitute phenotypes for strain numbers
 - Use appropriate font size
 - data on graphs are visible when reduced - text is not
 - Remove data that are not relevant

Slide Design

- Avoid repetition in format - it gets boring
- Consistency provides clarity
 - color schemes for different types of data
 - data presentation format
 - cartoon representations

Slide Design

- Don't use informative titles for your slides - you might give away the punchline
- There is no point in including a title if it does not convey information
- The title can prepare the audience for what you are going to tell them

Presentation

- Don't rehearse your presentation aloud
 - practicing will take the spontaneity out of a talk
 - your colleagues will think you've lost it if they see you locked in a conference room lecturing to yourself
- Practice your talk aloud 5-10 times
 - time your talk
 - use a pointer
 - consider your first set of slides as a draft - modify as necessary
 - if possible, get feedback from a colleague

Presentation

- Use the title of the slide to remind yourself of what you want to say
- Each slide should have a well planned transition
 - The next slide should be introduced before it is displayed
 - The first and last sentences for each slide should be close to memorized

Presentation

- Stand perpendicular to the slide so that you can speak to the audience or point to the slide with little movement
- Face the audience
 - make eye contact
 - turn to the slide only to point
 - use the pointer judiciously
 - don't be afraid to move

Answering Questions

- If you don't know the answer to a question, just start talking and maybe something will come to you
- Repeat the question
 - this engages the rest of the audience
 - this can be used to clarify the question being asked
 - this buys time while you formulate an answer
- If you don't know the answer, just say so

Summary

- There is a formula for giving a good talk - follow it!
- There are no rules - use your own judgment
 - consider some of the elements discussed today
 - be yourself
 - be creative
 - strive for clarity - "less is more"
 - learn from the presentations of others
 - and remember to think of your audience!