Effective Presentations

This week’s topic is important because

1. when we give a presentation, we want to communicate effectively and leave a good impression
2. when we sit through a presentation, we don’t want to be bored silly

Q: how many/what type of presentations have you done yourself, as well as attended?

What impressions do you have of what you have seen and heard?

Deal with two sections in turn

1. Oral presentations
2. Poster presentations

Oral Presentations

Preparing

1. Know your topic
Knowing the background behind what you are saying helps you feel confident and comfortable

Preparing

2. Think about what your audience needs to know
Who are you talking to, what do they know, and what do you need to tell them so they understand
Remember, their perspective is usually different from yours
Oral Presentations

**Preparing**
- 1. Dress appropriately
- Know your audience, what is appropriate for the setting?
- 2. Be on time
- Ensures you know the equipment you will use and the room
- You will also have time to find out about last-minute schedule changes
- 3. Do not write down everything you say
- People who read everything are boring
- If you need to, write down an outline to keep you on track
- If you truly know what you’re talking about, you won’t need many notes

**Oral Presentations**

**Preparing**
- 4. Use visual aids where possible
- PowerPoint is a wonderful thing, but know its strengths and limitations
- Do: summarize, use graphics to illustrate, and use font sizes large enough to read easily
- Don’t: put up every word you say
- Hand-outs can be good to organize notes or provide graphics that would be too complicated for the audience to write down

**Oral Presentations**

**Preparing**
- 5. Practice
- Know the time limit, time yourself, and test your notes
- Too much information, or not enough?
- How does the presentation flow?
- Something that looks good on paper might not be when delivered orally, so actual practice is important

**Oral Presentations**

**Presenting**
- 1. Dress appropriately
- Know your audience, what is appropriate for the setting?
Oral Presentations

- Presenting
  - 3. Keep track of time
  - 4. Speak loudly, clearly, and with enthusiasm
  - 5. Never apologize
  - 6. Look at your audience
  - 7. Use and address each of your visuals

Poster Presentations

- Basic Elements
  - Subject title
  - Author(s), affiliation
  - Textual materials
  - Visual materials
  - Short list of references

- Viewability
  - Title should be readable from at least 15 or 20 feet away
  - Other text should be legible from four to six feet away (18 point font is minimum)
  - Does your poster attract attention? Vibrant colors help, but use these selectively

- Textual material
  - Be concise
  - Use point form rather than paragraphs
  - Final word count: 250-450 words (no more!)
  - Essential information that goes beyond this can go in a hand-out

- Visual material
  - All visuals must directly relate to project
  - Keep visuals as simple as possible (quick understanding)
  - Graphs and maps are better than tables
  - Consider a variety of visual types and choose the one(s) best suited to your poster

- Layout
  - Identify everything you want to include
  - Sketch out a rough layout of all elements of the poster (to scale) to see what works best
  - Place explanatory text boxes close to visuals
Poster Presentations

- Layout
  - Help your readers move through the poster by using columns, rows, arrows, and/or sequential numbers/letters
  - *Don't overload the poster*; open space is important too