

Lecture 6

Presentation Skills

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

COMPSCI 289

Prof. Robert Amor

Learning Objectives

- Learn approaches to effective presentations
- Information on research group talk structure

How to deliver effective presentations

- Know your audience and their background
- Research thoroughly
- Document your sources
- Write your speech
- Prepare the slideshow



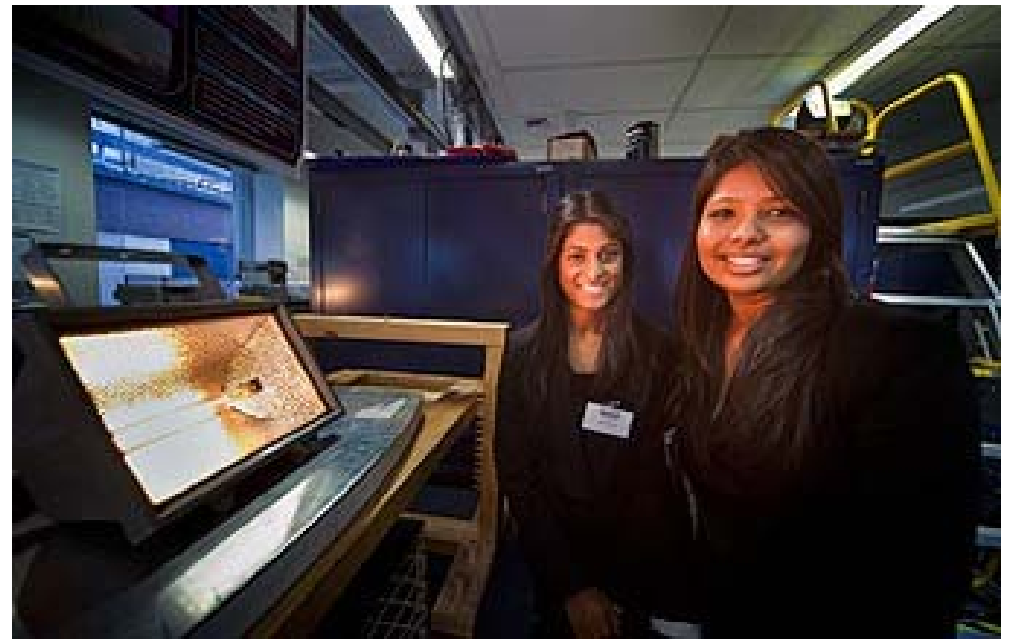
<http://sustainability.psu.edu/student-groups>

Prepare the slideshow

- What are the points you want to get across?
- Slides are a visual aid
 - Pictures are good (oops...)
- Don't put too much on a slide
- Not too much flashy graphics/animations
- Time your presentation
- References at end
- Extra material after the end
- Choose an appropriate style

How to deliver effective presentations

- Rehearse and have a dress rehearsal
- Modify based on rehearsals
- Prepare yourself
- Style on stage
- Present to the audience
- Answer questions



http://www.ece.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/news-events-and-noticees/events/part4-projects_1.html

Common mistakes I've seen

- Too much text on a slide
- Reading all the text on the slide
- Text on slides too small (≥ 24 pt)
- Facing the screen rather than audience
- Too many slides (12 for 20 mins?)
- Interlocutory sounds
- Failed movies and live demonstrations

Asking Questions?

- You can always ask a question!
 - It's what science is all about...
- Reflecting on what is being presented
 - Does it match what you know/believe?
- Why do we ask questions?
 - Clarify your understanding
 - To address contradictions
 - To highlight an aspect of the research
 - To gain further insight from experts
 - To propose future directions
 - To relate to other research you are aware of
 - To be known 😊

Asking Questions?

- Just ask one question
 - Wait for the chair or speaker to acknowledge you
 - Prepare - jot down what it is you want to ask about
 - Provide some context
 - On slide X
 - When you were talking about Y
 - Don't make it about you!
 - Closed questions
 - Open questions



Answering Questions

- Stay calm!
- Think about possible questions prior to the presentation
- Ensure you understand the question
 - Ask for clarification or rephrasing if you don't
- Take a few seconds to think about your answer
- Repeat your understanding of the question
- Give a short answer (yes/no) before a detailed explanation
- If you don't know then say so – don't make it up
 - You could offer an opinion
- If it is a misunderstanding of your presentation, then make that clear and try to rephrase
- If very detailed, or long to answer, suggest talking later

Research Group Presentations

- 20 minute presentation
 - What is the research area?
 - What do researchers in this area do?
 - What are the 'big' questions in the area, or how will it change the world?
- 30 minute discussion and analysis session
 - Q&A session
 - Work in small groups to develop questions about the area (10 minutes) with support from the presenter and course lecturers
 - Groups pose their questions to the presenter (20 minutes)
 - Presenter to pose a question/issue for the class. In small groups you'll discuss the question/issue (10 minutes), then have a debate around that question/issue
 - In small groups you'll develop a research project idea to tackle a big issue from the talk (10 minutes), then pitch the project idea to the presenter

Summary

- Presentations require structure and rehearsal
- Slides are a prop, minimize what goes on them
- Research group presentations will be interactive (+fun)
 - Asking questions is a core skill of a scientist

Sources

- Davies, K. (2014) Research Methods, CONS 7819 & CONS 7821, Unitec, New Zealand.
- Hirata, T., Gorman, T. and Hiromi, Y. (2016) Let's Enjoy the Q&A Session!, NIG Method for Scientific English Presentation, dZERO Press, ISBN 978-4-907623-17-3.
- WikiHow (2015) How to Delivery Effective Presentations, last accessed 22/10/2015, <http://www.wikihow.com/Deliver-Effective-Presentations>