

Preparing a Conference Presentation

The Room

- Check the room ahead of time to assess the technology available and any peculiarities of the room.
- Show up early for your talk to schmooze, become comfortable with the room, and address any technical issues.

The Audience

- How familiar are they with your topic?
- Don't assume they share your non-academic interests.
- How will you be assessed?

Your Style

- No matter what your style is, *appear* at ease.
- Practice. Have notes, but don't read them.
- Don't hide behind the podium
- Aim the laser pointer with two hands for stability
- Interact with your audience, if time permits.

General Slide Style

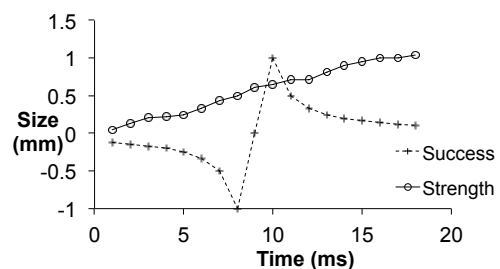
- All information should be relevant.
- Maximize the informative space.
- Strive to have interesting information rather than gimmicky slides.
- Keep the background simple.
- Focus the audience by introducing points one at a time.
- Bluish backgrounds are good. Avoid using two colors that differ by the amount of blue light (yellow vs. white; blue vs. black).

General Talk Style

- Introduce and motivate the topic by linking it to something of interest to the layperson.
- Whenever possible show a picture, demonstration or video clip of something instead of descriptive text. *Why can't you show a sample stimulus?*
- Leave the PowerPoint world for the real world with demonstrations and visual aids.
- Close with a summary of the main points, a link to the big picture and mention some future directions.
- People, funding agencies like to be thanked. Thank them!
- Finish early, ask for questions and give them something to take home.

Plotting Data

- Introduce each plot starting with the axes and the curves.
- Unless the curves are **very** redundant, don't have more than 3 or 4 curves per plot.
- Avoid abbreviations.
- Orient numbers and text horizontally
- Use the slide background
- If you have many things to compare, consider "Small Multiples"



Useful Links

Reach Week at WKU

<http://www.wku.edu/studentresearch/>

What to wear?

<http://career.utk.edu/CS/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Dress-for-Success-Handout.pdf>

A collection of great talks on a broad range of topics.
ted.com

Nancy Duarte - the secret structure of great talks

http://www.ted.com/talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks.html

Edward Tufte - a leading expert at presenting visual information.

www.edwardtufte.com

This Document - If you would like a digital copy of this document, you can find it here:

<http://www.wku.edu/psychological-sciences/labs/semantics/presentations.php>