How to Give a Lousy Presentation

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Public Speaking

One of People’s Biggest Fears

Butterflies are Your Friends

The Audience is On Your Side
  • True for Technical and Business Presentations
  • Not True for Controversial Public Presentations?

Good Speakers are Made, Not Born

Best Talks are Told Like a Story, Not Read
Presentation Outline

• Before Your Presentation
  – Preparation
  – Organization
  – Practice

• Visual Aids

• Presentation Mechanics

• Conclusions and Recommendations

• Credits
Preparation
Analyze Your Audience

Their Level of Knowledge

Their Concerns and Interests

Define Your Message
Getting Started

Define Your Objective
Collect Materials
Define Your Message
Consider the Situation
Organization
Outline Your Presentation

• Introduction

• Body

• Conclusion

“Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, tell them what you told them.”
Why Outline Presentation?

• Tests Logic

• Coordinates Presentation

• Tests Coherence and Relationship of Items

• Helps Define Use of Time
Constructing an Outline

• Review Collected Materials
• Determine Central Theme
• Organize Presentation Sections
• Estimate Timing
Practice
Practice

• Number of Times Based on Your Comfort Level
• Create/Revise/Edit Notes (if required)
• Check Spelling
• Anticipate Questions/Reactions
• Gain Confidence
Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn’t mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh?
Delivery

• Be Yourself. Be confident.
• Look at Your Audience
• Do Not Over-Communicate
• Do Not Read Slides
• “Never” Apologize
Visual Aids
Why Do We Use Visual Aids?

• Increase Audience Engagement
• Improve Message Comprehension
• Increase Retention Rates
• Explain Complex Facts and Processes
Why Do We Use Visual Aids? (continued)

• Reinforce Key Points
• Make Abstract Ideas Concrete
• Leave a Lasting Impression
• Impart a Professional Image

Electricity Requirements for Activated Sludge Wastewater

Derived from data from the Water Environment Energy Conservation Task Force *Energy Conservation in Wastewater Treatment*
Good Slides Share Common Features

Statement That Makes a Conclusion
Not Too Many Words
No Content That is Too Small to Read
Pictures / Graphics
Easy to Follow
Orient the Reader to Where You are in the Presentation
General Rules for Slides

• Limit Number of Text Lines to Six
• Use Upper and Lower Case Letters
• Use Capitals, Bold, Italics, Underlining *Sparingly*
• Keep Text Large and Legible (24 point minimum)
• Keep Number of Fonts to a Minimum
General Rules for Slides (continued)

• Use Same Alignment Throughout Presentation

• Do Not Center Long Lines of Text

• Use Pictures and Graphics
  – Intermingle with Text
  – Keep Relevant to the Topic
  – Keep Emphasis to Major Point

• Caution on Use of Clip Art
Effective Presentations

• Font should be plain (stick with it)
• 4 – 6 lines per slide
• Visible to all of the room
• No less than 28 point
• Use complimentary colors
Ideal Colors

• Black on White
Ideal Colors

- Black on White
- White on Black
Ideal Colors

• Black on White
• White on Black
• White on Dark Blue
Ideal Colors

- Black on White
- White on Black
- White on Dark Blue
- Yellow on Dark Blue
Colors

• Avoid Using Red and Green to Differentiate Points
• Establish and Stick with a Color Scheme
• Use Sudden Color Change for Effect (Sparingly)
Transitions and Animation

• Use Sparingly
• Maintain Relatively Consistent Approach
• Avoid “Death by PowerPoint”
Effective Presentation Mechanics

• Consider Room Layout

• Stay on One Side of Line of Projection and Face the Audience

• Do Not Be Tied to a Podium

• Avoid “Follow the Bouncing Laser”

• Use Laptop as a Monitor
Consider Room Layout to Connect with Your Audience
Consider Room Layout to Connect with Your Audience
Examples
Great Teams
Conclusions and Recommendations

• Work to Give Good Presentations
• Prepare, Organize, Practice
• Be Yourself and Deliver with Confidence
• Use Visual Aids Wisely
Credits

• Dave Barber, Public Works Director, Peoria, Illinois
• Stephanie Reith
• Kevin Richardson

References

• “How to Give a Really Lousy Technical Presentation”, by Joseph Haworth and Dave Reardon, WEFTEC, September 1992
Thank You

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