

Guidelines for a well received presentation.

Presentation Structure: The structure should be quite similar to your reports. There is a critical difference though: not all of your peers would have read this paper and you need to bring them all up to scratch with what the paper is about. This is your main goal. So first, introduce a summary of the paper and key findings and some explanation of novelty and related work (context setting for older works). In the middle of the presentation you want to describe the “meat” of the paper and the “results” so that your peers who did not read the paper can go home having an idea of what the paper is about and how the problem is solved. It is often hard to find the right balance between being very high level and going into too much details: it might take you some time to find this balance so iterate over the presentation and try it on a friend maybe.

You should spend some time highlighting positives and negatives and give your subjective views of the contribution and limitations: I am sure you would have already done a bit of this while explaining the approach and results but this is the space for a summary and to really highlight these aspects. It is also always good to have a summary at the end of what you think of the paper and to highlight where this general research could be going (or not going). Like for the reports, remember it is often easier to be critical than to see positives so try harder on the positives.

Slides Format and Content: Remember that *your slides are not your script*. The slides are for your audience and they should be augment what you are saying not simply repeat it. Using figures and animation is often useful for the audience to follow. Too many words cannot be read easily. Font size and colour combinations are very important (make sure your peers at the back of the room can read the slides!).

Timing: You have 20 mins for this presentation. It is important that you practice to make sure you are within the limits. I tend to keep a counter/stop watch with me while I present to keep track of how much time I have left so to tune if I have to speed up or slow down. A very common mistake is to speed too much time at the start (on motivation and summary) and then have little time to describe evaluation results.

Presentation Delivery: Rehearsing helps to make the delivery smoother, do try to rehearse at least once. Try to think of presentations you have liked in the past: they probably had in common the fact that you did not get bored and that you could follow what the presenter was saying.

Speak reasonably loudly so that everyone can hear you: asking the back row if they can hear you is a good way to start. Do not look at the screen too much but address your audience and engage with them: you are having a conversation with them! Sometimes asking questions to the audience helps them keeping them engaged.

Pauses help the audience digest: silence is a good thing sometimes but often it is difficult for us to include pauses in our talks!

Note that what you say may be different to what is in the slides: you should make sure you use the two different “channels” to optimize what reaches your audience. For example, some things you say do not need to be in the slide and the setting of an experiment is best described with a picture than your handwaving.

Q&A: Do not be defensive. It is likely that most questions will be clarification questions from peers who did not understand something in the paper or what you said. It is ok to say you do not know something or have similar doubts as the question. It is not your work you are presenting so a) you do not know the details and b) it is ok to disagree with the authors. It is however your job to do right by the authors and try to put yourself in their shoes in answering the questions.

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