Formal Presentations

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Outline

- Preparations
- The Slides
- The Delivery
- Interacting with the Audience
Preparations 1

- Know your message.
  - What should the audience get out of it?
    - What are the goals of your presentation?
    - Consider the time allocated.
  - Do you know what you’re talking about?
    - Be ready to answer questions beyond your presentation’s content.
Preparations 2

- Know your audience.
  - What do they know already?
    - Already familiar with the topic?
    - Lots of domain knowledge?
  - What do they want?
    - Technical information?
    - Marketing?
    - Potential customer?
Slides 1

- Provide an outline.

- Provide a final slide for question and answer period.
  - References.
  - Contact information.
  - Summary.
Keep it simple.
Make sentences short.
Use the slides as an outline.
Use effects to avoid boredom.

Don’t add too many effects.
Don’t make the audience read too much.
Don’t include everything.
Slides 3

- A picture is worth a thousand words.
- Make sure the picture is relevant (not like this one).
- Diagrams are also good.
- Keep them simple.
Delivery 1

- Plan for about 2 min/slide.
  - Lots of variation.
- Consider printing slides for complex, technical presentations.
- Verify that equipment works before the presentation.
Delivery 2

- Speak clearly; project your voice.
- Use gestures to add emphasis.
- Jokes are good, but don’t overdo it.
- Be excited about your material.

- Don’t read the slides.
- Don’t turn your back to the audience (for long periods).
- Don’t go too fast.
- Don’t speak in a monotone
Delivery 3

- Do a practice run (out loud). Time it.
- *Got too much?* It’s okay to skip slides. (Can return to them during question and answer)
- *Got too little?* It’s okay to end early. (The audience will love it)
- Practice makes perfect.
Interactions

- Allow time for question/answer period.
- Listen to question; answer directly.
- *It’s okay to not know.*
- Don’t be rattled by a heckler.
  - There’s always one
- Let audience members talk to each other.
Summary

- Know your material.
- Know your audience.
- Keep the slides simple.
- Add visual aids in moderation.
- Use the slides to support your talk, not define your talk.
- Engage the audience.
- Be enthusiastic; be natural. Stay focused.