



## How to Give a Great Scientific Presentation

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1. Get to know your audience and tailor your presentation accordingly. One of the fastest ways to lose an audience is to talk above or below their level of knowledge.
  2. Identify three key messages you want them to remember at the end of your presentation. Focus on these points and reinforce them. Avoid a discussion of the entire body of literature; focus on your learning objectives and leave out the non-essential material.
  3. Keep slides simple:
    - Limit to one key message per slide.
    - Limit text and bullet points as much as possible.
    - Use high-quality graphics instead of low-resolution images.
    - If you need to apologize for a busy slide, busy table or poor image, remove it. Never use one slide, when two will do.
    - Avoid distracting slide transitions.
  4. Choose a Sans-Serif font – Arial, Helvetica, Calibri) – as they display better when projected and are easier to read from a distance. Avoid stylish and hard to read fonts. Italics can be hard to read, and ALL CAPITAL LETTERS TAKE LONGER TO READ. Choose a large font size, at least 28 points or larger.
  5. Maximum contrast between text and background is key. Either use light text on a dark background or dark text on a light background. For colorblind people, red is as dull as blue or dark green. Thus, avoid using red text on black or blue backgrounds.
  6. Rehearse several times in front of a mirror, spouse, or colleague. Consider audio/video recording your presentation and listening or watching your presentation to help with timing and vocal contrast. Don't try to squeeze a 45-minute lecture into 30 minutes. Nothing annoys the audience more than going over your allotted time.
  7. Focus on your opening and start strong with an attention grabber. Tell a story, show a picture or mention a compelling statistic. The audience's attention is highest at the beginning, and this is your opportunity to grab their attention. Skip the slide with learning objectives.
  8. You are the presentation. Do not read from your slides. They are merely there to support you, not the other way around. Support your speech with images as much as you can. If your talk can be presented and understood by someone else with just your slides, you may have too much text.
  9. Connect with your audience. Make eye contact and move your gaze around. Be enthusiastic and passionate. Instead of standing behind the podium, walk around the stage, if possible. Do not speak in a monotone! You are telling a story. It's not what you say, but how you say it!
  10. Close with emphasis and energy, use a story that encompasses your talk. Summarize key take-home messages, leave time for questions, and finish early. Skip the slide with the long list of references at the end.
- ### Special Considerations for Virtual Presentations
11. Choose a private, quiet, well-lit room and use a neutral or light-colored background. Avoid windows, bright lights, and distracting artwork or photos in the background.
  12. Ensure a stable internet connection and check your computer, microphone, and camera to make sure they are working well. Use a dedicated microphone, if possible.
  13. Position the camera at eye level or looking slightly downwards to give the effect of eye contact. Look into the camera, not at the screen while speaking.
  14. Present a calm and engaging demeanor. Avoid swiveling or fidgeting in the chair, touching or itching your face, and adjusting your hair or glasses.