Preparing and Giving Successful Talks
Overview

• What Type of Talk?
• Gauging your Audience
• Philosophy of Talk Construction
• Basic Components
• Other Things to Consider
• Strengths and Weaknesses of Powerpoint
Type of Talk

- Conference Presentation
- Departmental Seminar
- Job Talk
Why does it matter?

What is the nature of the conference?

Who is most likely to view the poster?
Philosophy

Work backwards
  What is the main point(s) you’re trying to convey
  Can it boiled down to one?

Which data are directly relevant?

Which methods?
Know your audience
What are their expectations?
Remember that your audience has not done all
the background reading that you have!

Three parts to a talk
1. Tell 'em what you’re gonna tell ‘em.
2. Tell it to ‘em
3. Tell ‘em what you told ‘em
Introduction
  Goal: what is the purpose of this talk?
  Why is this work important and/or interesting?
  What is the necessary background to understand the talk
      (sometimes in a separate section).

Overview

Problem Statement
  Precise statement of what you are trying to do.

Approach
  How are you going to solve the problem?
  Why is this a good way to solve it?
  What were the alternatives?
Basic Components

Results
Describe experimental setup.
Motivate what each test was trying to measure/prove.
Present results.
Explain expected (intuitive results).
Show how actual results (dis)agree with intuitive results.
Explain WHY!

Conclusions
Summarize results
Remind people of important of result
Discuss shortcomings of results
Discuss future work
Things to Consider during Talk Prep

• A slide with more than 12 words is generally counterproductive
• Resort to text only words fail
• Consider using the notes option
• Use the full space
• Too much time on detail; too little on context
• Practice and get feedback
Things to Consider During Talk

- Don’t stare at computer screen
- The rhythm of speaking
- Listeners get one chance to get what you’re saying, no ability to rewind
AS YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE IN SLIDE 397...

GAAAAH!

"POWERPOINT" POISONING.
I'd like to start with a diagram.

It's a bunch of shapes connected by lines.

Now I will say some impressive words.

Synchronized incremental digital integrated dynamic e-commerce space.

Any questions?

May I have a copy of your presentation?

The results of my experiment are disturbing.
Make your "PowerPoint" presentation so boring that our CEO will slip into a trance.

Then I'll whisper to him subliminal suggestions to increase our budget.

More budget. Kill the pointy-haired monster.
I COULD HAVE E-MAILED YOU MY POWERPOINT DECK, AND YOU COULD HAVE READ IT IN FIVE MINUTES.

BUT I PREFER MAKING YOU SIT HERE FOR AN HOUR WHILE I READ EACH BULLET POINT IN SLOW MOTION.

POINT NUMBER ONE...

YANK THIS AS HARD AS YOU CAN.
Example

• Don’t you find annoying – well almost insulting – when a speaker reads word for word their slides?

• It is certainly something that should be avoided at all costs
Backgrounds

- Think about sitting in front of a given background for the length of a talk...
- Simple
- Not too much wasted space
- Colors: Do they work or not?
BACKGROUNDS

🌟 Busy?
BACKGROUNDs

• Busy?
BACKGROUND

Wasted space?
TEXT AND BACKGROUND COLORS

What about Colors?

Can you read this?
Sans Serif Fonts:

Arial, Calibri & Helvetica

These project well, are spaced nicely and are easy to read when bolded
Fonts and Text Styles

Bordeaux
Curlz
Futura, etc
Cracked
Edwardian Script

These types of fonts generally are more difficult to look at over a 45 minute seminar.
Font Sizes

Titles – >44pt

• First Major Text 28-36 pt
  
  – Secondary Lines (24 pt)

• Tertiary Lines (18 pt)
Graphics

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information
EDWARD R. TUFTE

Envisioning Information

Edward R. Tufte
The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint: Pitching Out Corrupts Within
Animation

"I need someone well versed in the art of torture—"

The Night Before the Big Meeting Frank Receives a Visit from the PowerPoint Fairy.
Tufte maxims

- Audience not dumb
- Use teaching principles!
- Be clear about stuff
- Use enough words etc.
- Be honest and accurate
- Allow audience to explore data
- Use appropriate media