

Structure of a 10-minute Oral Scientific Presentation

- Title
- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Acknowledgments
- Question and answer period

Title Slide (10-15 sec)

- **Title should include**
 - **Subject**
 - **Location**
 - **Time period**
- **Your name**
- **Your affiliation**
- **Appropriate logos**
- **Say “Good morning / afternoon / evening”**

Advanced Meds 490 Oral Presentations

**USC undergraduate student
KSOM, Department of Life
Mentor: Dr. Know Everything**

Background (1-2 min)

- Usually a few slides
- Engage audience
- Set stage for outbreak investigation
- Provide rationale for planned study
- Essential information (only) about project
- Establish relevance to health
- Include a slide describing study objectives

Methods (1-2 min)

- Usually a few slides
- Describe study design(s)
- Describe study groups and why selected
- Say what laboratory tests were used

Results (3-4 min)

- **Usually several slides**
- **Emphasize most important findings**
- **Describe characteristics of study participants, animal cohort, etc**
- **Include descriptive results and analytic results**
- **Use mixture of text, tables, figures, photos as appropriate to your data**

Discussion (2-3 min)

- **Interpretation of findings**
 - Don't repeat results
 - Prioritize findings from most to least important
 - Link findings to study objectives
 - Put findings into context with previous studies
- **Limitations slide (only the important ones)**
- **Conclusions slide(s) based on your findings**
- **Recommendations slide(s)**
 - Directions for future studies

Acknowledgments (10-15 sec)

- Recognize coauthors and contributors
- Same logos as on title slide
- Your last words = “Thank You”

Creating Effective Slides

Effective Slides...

- **Are uncluttered, clear, visible**
- **Don't distract the audience**
- **Use informative titles**
 - **“Characteristics of Study Participants”**
 - **“Risk Factors for Illness”**
 - **Not “Results 1, “Results 2”**
- **Use bolded, sans serif font (Arial, Tahoma)**
- **Have simple, high-contrast, consistent color schemes**

Color-Blind “Friendly” Presentations

- **Avoid red-green color combinations**
- **If must use red, use yellowish red (R=255 / G=82 / B=0) instead of pure red**
- **Avoid red characters / lines on dark background**
- **Make text and lines as big or thick as practical**
- **Use high-contrast color scheme**

Recommended Fonts and Sizes

- **Sans serif font, all titles and text bolded**
- **For Arial (bolded):**
 - **Titles 36 pt**
 - **Main bullets 28 pt**
 - **Sub-bullets 28 pt if room, otherwise 24 pt**
 - **Avoid sub-sub bullets (re-format)**
- **Keep text / title size consistent across slides**
 - **Stop PowerPoint from changing text size as you type**
 - **Go to Tools, AutoCorrect**
 - **Uncheck “Autofit body/title text to placeholder”**

Effective Text Slides

- **Order of slide text matches order of script**
- **Key words only, not complete sentences**
- **8–10 lines maximum**
- **Bulleted text better than numbered items in most cases**
- **Parallel structure (all verbs, all nouns, etc)**

Things to Avoid

- **Visual clutter from too many colors**
- **Unbolded, serif font like Times New Roman**
- **ALL CAPS (HARD ON THE EYES)**
- **Pseudo-3D charts and graphs**
- **Animation (no flying objects; slide builds=OK)**
- **Clip art that serves no purpose**
- **Unnecessary grid lines in figures**
- **Necessary lines that are too thin**
- **All PowerPoint design templates**

Photos and Clip Art — Tips

- **Should serve a purpose**
- **No copyrighted materials without permission**
- **No photos of identifiable people unless release**
- **No photos of your kids or your pets**
- **Clip art cautions**
 - **Simplest is most effective**
 - **Check in Slide Show to make sure it is not animated**

Tips on Delivering Oral Presentations

Preparation Tips

- Use script, flesh out bullet pts into sentences
- Practice is the key to making sure it doesn't sound scripted
- Print your script in large enough type (14-16 pt)
 - Check script size in Notes Master or Notes view
 - Print one slide and accompanying script per page
- Time your presentation
- If you used “Rehearse slide timings” feature, go to Slide Show, Set Up Show, and uncheck “Advance slides using timings if present”

Delivery Tips

- **Get there early**
- **Don't start speaking until ready**
- **Speak slowly and with sufficient volume**
- **Don't turn your back on your audience**
- **Check that the correct slide is projecting**
- **Use microphone correctly**
- **Be careful with humor**
- **Explain charts / graphs before giving point**
- **Explain associations clearly**
- **Pause before advancing to next slide**

Reasons Not to Use a Laser Pointer

- Have to turn away from audience to use it
- Some projection screens absorb the laser, so audience in room cannot see it
- Color-blind people can't see it (red)
- Can become a crutch
- If your hands are shaking, pointer will show it
- Alternatives:
 - Building “pointers” into slides
 - Using computer cursor (arrow)

Question & Answer Period: Don'ts

- Don't fumble for extra slides
- Don't be defensive even if question hostile
- Don't ask “Did that answer your question?”
- Don't thank the questioner for the question
- Don't rate the question
- Don't back away from the podium as if poison
- Don't hang on to podium as if life-preserver

Take-Home Messages

- **Decide type of data and the point you want to convey, then choose the visual accordingly (text, table, graph, chart, etc.)**
- **Well organized, practiced presentation with clear, effective slides (when used) reinforces your message and helps you communicate effectively**
- **Good science is more important than glitz**

THANK YOU!