

Guideline: Presentations

The key to a very good presentation is a decent preparation. Think about WHAT you want to present, WHY and HOW?

Preparation

- Define specific aims you are following
- Brainstorm: What do you already know about the topic? What is specifically interesting for your audience? What does the audience know about the topic?)
- What kind of material is helpful?
- Choose which information you would like to share
- What do you need to illustrate and explain certain issues?
- Plan and structure the presentation

Structure

Introduction

(It is important to motivate your audience with something catchy, provocative etc., the next step would be the intro of topic etc.)

- Greet your audience, introduce yourself
- Introduce the topic and the aim of your presentation
- Present an outline, find a catchy motivation (provocative, question raising)

Main part

- Present your arguments logically, follow a red thread
- Offer the audience the chance to ask questions

End

- Summarize the most important aspects
- Invite the audience to a discussion (by raising a final question, mention the provocative introduction and open the floor for opinions)

The Presentation

- Presentations need a written script, decide for a suitable form (large print, write on one side of the page only, number the pages)
- Use colors, highlight important aspects (Don't overdo!)
- Don't write a complete text, rather key words and phrases
- Talk at a natural pace, don't rush, don't talk too slowly
- Use signal words for when to include a transparency, etc.

Language

- The presentation is in English
- Be clear, pay attention to correct and understandable pronunciation

- Pay attention to your body language, don't walk around too much, never turn your back to the audience (this is especially important when doing power-point presentations!)
- Use relatively easy sentence structures, the audience would like to follow the content you are offering, not marvel about sophisticated language

Handouts

- Handouts are very useful if they include the necessary information: Name, university and institute/department, term and date, topic, instructor, have a clear structure and a bibliography

Keep the following aspects in mind while preparing and giving the presentation:

- Which kind of presenting technique makes most sense? A good power-point presentation is very difficult! Nobody wants to suffer through slide after slide where each and every word is read out loud!
- If you decide for power-point, do not use different effects for each slide, this is distracting, keep in mind that you want to impress your audience with good content, not showing off your computer skills.
- The single slides should SUPPORT what you are saying, illustrate your content, NOT CONTAIN the content.
- Too many colors, flying sentences and sound effects do not improve your power-point presentation!
- Flipcharts, pictures, diagrams help to make your presentation more interesting.
- Pay attention to the size of the texts you are offering on transparencies etc.
- Would it make sense to include your audience beyond "Would you like to ask any questions?" (Please also note that questions are a sign of interest and not of criticism. The more questions the better!)