

How to do a seminar with slides

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May 22, 2011

Content

- ▶ The point
- ▶ The structure
- ▶ The content
- ▶ To keep in mind
- ▶ To avoid

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Doing research is one thing...

...speaking about the research done is a totally different matter.

The importance of giving a good seminar cannot be underestimated!

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The importance of giving a good seminar cannot be underestimated!

And, btw, it is just a waste of time attending a talk without understanding a single word.

Think about this

- 1) It is much more likely that someone will attend a talk of yours, rather than reading one of your papers

- 2) The purpose of a talk is dual:
 - ▶ to explain people what you do in your research
 - ▶ to let people appreciate you (especially if you are young)

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The story

Every talk should have a story behind.

When preparing it, ask yourself:

- ▶ in the time given to me, where do I want to bring the audience?
- ▶ How will I bring it there?

The agenda

To give a structure is very important: it gives cornerstone here and there that helps following the discussion.

Where to start?

From the beginning!

3/4 of your talk should be spent in giving the background: most likely nobody in the audience ever thought about the problem you are speaking about.

Allow them to understand where the question is coming from

The '3 say' rule

Remember to:

- ▶ Say what you are going to say
- ▶ Say it
- ▶ Explain what you just said

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A talk should give a message

not proofs!

For proofs there are the articles.

Never prove a statement unless the proof can be written on one page

One chart - one message

Charts are not made to be filled

What gives importance to a chart is the message you want to pass, not the amount of things written on it

If you want to say 2 things, just make 2 slides

Is it easy? Then say it!

Never be afraid of saying things which look obvious to you:

- ▶ It can be everything but obvious for the audience
- ▶ Even if it is really obvious, one is typically happy to see that it is properly following what you are saying

Who speaks?

You!

Slides are just a support. Never forget that the protagonist of a talk is the speaker.

The title

Every slide should have a title explaining/introducing the content of the slide itself.

If you can't find an appropriate title, then ask yourself: do I really want to keep this slide?

Write only what will be read

Are you really writing a formula so long that nobody will read/understand? Why??

Are you writing sentences so long that people don't know if they should listen to you or read the slide? Why??

Are you thinking about writing something in yellow over a white background? Seriously??

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It requires time

To make a good talk requires time:

- ▶ prepare the slides
- ▶ correct them
- ▶ try the talk by yourself before presenting it
- ▶ check the time

How many slides?

The rule of thumb is: 1 slide every 2 minutes

References

Write a full reference like "[Mad Max, Journal of strange things 1999]" in a slide? Useless.

Careful! References are important! Tell them. (which is not the same as to write them)

Move forward

Never switch back to a previous slide

If you really need, announce it.

Proofreading

Check for errors before presenting your work

It is terribly bad to see slides full of misprints: denotes lack of care

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Is it a detail? Then who cares?

Stick to the main point.

If it's not substantial, then why saying it?

It is really easy to lose part of the audience: never do something which carries this risk

Never speak fast

It may happen that you realize that you are in short time.

Then, just say less things.

To say anything so quickly that nobody will understand, its just meaningless