

What to do (and not to do) in Oral Presentations

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MSRI-UP
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Outline

- 1 Discussion of examples
- 2 Preparing for the presentation ...
 - Preparation
 - Things to Avoid
 - After the first draft ...
- 3 During the presentation
 - Some tips
 - Things to avoid

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Preparation

- Prepare your presentation with enough time
- Know how much time you will have
- Know your audience
- Know what equipment will be available
- Use beamer

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Preparation

- **Start with an outline of your presentation**
- Present a slide that summarizes your problem
- Include background material and definitions adequate for the audience
- Include examples, pictures and graphs that illustrate the concepts and results
- Include the ideas or main arguments of your proofs

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Preparation

- Acknowledge previous work
- Mention connections with other areas
- Include conclusions and future work
- Provide references for more details
- Acknowledge financial support or people that helped

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Things to avoid ... Do not ...

- **Fill the screen with equations**
- Use a small font
- Copy articles
- Use cartoons
- Use too much text in one page
- Use too many colors

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After the first draft ...

- Practice the presentation to make sure that your timing is correct
- Make sure that your presentation “flows”
- Remember that it is not enough that you understand the topic and your problem, you need to be able to explain it to your audience
- Anticipate questions
- Prepare notes for yourself

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After the first draft ...

- **Revise the presentation**
- Practice again with some audience!
- Revise the presentation again!
- Practice again!
- Send the file to yourself by email

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Some tips

- **Be early!**
- Try the equipment and your files with enough time
- Clearly state the goal of your talk/project and come back to it often during the presentation
- Make eye contact with your audience

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Some tips

- **Speak clearly and loudly enough**
- Show enthusiasm for your work! (all the team!)
- Be conscious of your time
- If appropriate, tell anecdotes or some well-placed humor
- Point to your slides on the screen using a pointer

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Things to avoid ... Do not ...

- **Sacrifice main idea or intuition for details**
- Speak too fast (or too slow...)
- Stare at your slides without looking your audience
- Point the computer screen

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Things to avoid ... Do not ...

- **Cover the screen with your body**
- Write on the screen!
- BS the answer to a question. If you do not know the answer, just say something like “I am not sure at this moment but I will try to find out and get back to you”.
- Leave your files at home!

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