

# How to Give a Presentation

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Chem Eng 391



# 1. Organization

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- A. Introduction: Generate interest  
(Tell them what you are going to tell them)
  - 1. Attention getters: humor, controversy
  - 2. Present the 'problem'
  - 3. How does the problem relate to the audience?
- B. Flow of thought (Tell them the meat)
  - 1. Necessary information given
  - 2. Points are supported and logical
- C. Summary (Tell them what you told them)
- D. Timing: 15.000 minutes!!!**



## 2. Preparation

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- A. What is my objective?
- B. Who is my audience?
- C. What is the best format in which to present this?
- D. What organizational structure is best?



## 2. Preparation (cont.)

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### E. Visual Aids

1. Simple (few ideas per slide)
2. Easy to grasp (color, arrangement, logic)
3. Large enough
4. Types: Powerpoint, transparencies, posters, handouts, 35 mm slides, exhibits
5. Quantity: Goldilocks principle
  - (not too few, not too many, but just right!!)
  - Rule of thumb: 1 slide/minute



F. Materials and aids organized and ready

G. Effective, non-distracting notes/prompts

# 3. Objective

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A. Keep your objective in mind in all that you say and in all of your visual aids

## 1. Teach, don't impress

- Leave out details that won't help
- Focus on the concepts you want them to understand
- Keep content at a level with which they can identify

## 2. Less is often better

- An audience will not remember large amounts of factual information
- An audience will remember general principles and ideas that are well illustrated

### 3. Objective (cont.)

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Remember:

The most important thing  
is not that you gave the talk,  
but that you communicated your point!

# 4. Who is My Audience

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## A. Level

1. Dumb it down to the audience's level
2. Relate it to the audience's background
3. Remember that they haven't been researching the topic like you have

## B. Technical Presentations

1. Engineers, scientists, etc.
2. Interested in technical details
  - Apply what you teach to their problems and processes

## C. Business Presentations (later in semester)

1. Corporate personnel
2. Interested in corporate strategy
  - Improve products and decrease costs

## 5. Best Format

White board/easel	Overhead Projector (less popular)	Computer Presentation
Less formal	Moderately formal	Most formal
Brainstorming, audience involvement	Static, pre-developed ideas	Multi-media, animations, etc.
Easily modified	Difficult to modify	Easily modified
Visually stark	Static but attractive	Visually attractive
No technical difficulties	Few difficulties; easy transport	Possible technical difficulties; compatibility; difficult transport
Lighter room	Dim room	Darker room



# 6. Visuals

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## A. K.I.S.S. method

- “Keep it simple, stupid”

## B. Limit animation

- Extensive animation is irritating!!

## C. Font size and style can be distracting

- How is this for small?

- How **about** these font styles?

## D. Use color for **emphasis**

# 7. Delivery

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- A. Not distracting
  - 1. Don't play with the pointer
  - 2. Don't put your hand in your pocket
  - 3. Don't sway back and forth
- B. Smooth, confident, and relaxed
- C. Eye contact
- D. Don't block the visual aids
- E. Voice inflection, volume, enunciation
- F. Enthusiasm
- G. Effective language for the audience

# Other Guidelines

(from “Talking Points,” by N. Fitzgerald)

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1. Know your audience
2. Put it on paper
3. Draw a picture
4. Show and tell
5. Don't be afraid to repeat yourself
6. Practice, practice, practice
7. Be ready to answer questions
8. Let your body do the talking
9. Don't forget the details
10. Listen



# Common Problems

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- Nervous weaving
- Playing with laser pointer
- Speed demons
- Too soft (or too loud)
- Lukewarm
- Written notes
- Staring at screen
- Too much animation



# Examples

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