

Brief Guidelines for Preparing an Oral Presentation

Overview

- The goal is to clearly communicate your findings to an audience through a combination of a visual presentation (typically a PowerPoint presentation) AND what you say as a speaker.
- Be sure to minimize the amount of text you use on your slides; you should supplement the key points listed on your slides with your descriptions as a speaker. Don't simply read the text from your slides!

Some general tips for your PowerPoint

- Avoid busy fonts and backgrounds.
- A good length is length 10 to 12 mins; ~ 12 to 20 slides.
- Avoid crazy animation.
- Remember that the goal is to communicate your main point(s) on each slide.
- Avoid too much text on each slide; font size ≥ 28 .
- Follow the "six by six" rule (not a strict rule, but a good guideline: maximum of six bullet points per slide; maximum of six words per bullet point).
- Don't type everything you will say.
- It can help to animate items so that they come in one at a time; avoid having information on the slide that distracts the reader from what you are talking about at the moment; for example, have the final bullet item on a slide appear when you're ready to talk about it, not before.
- Use pictures! - if you get them from the internet, cite your source.
- Pay special attention to how graphs and tables paste into your PowerPoint file, especially font size. Sometimes it helps to paste graphs or tables as images. It can also help to paste them as screenshots.
- Don't rush when explaining graphs, give the audience time to process what they are looking at. A good habit is to begin by explaining what the axes represent and what the symbols on the graph represent.

Organization

- Follow the same general organization as written reports: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion.
- Be sure to provide background information about your topic in the introduction; refer back to it at the end of your discussion.
- State your question(s) and/or hypothesis(es) on a separate slide along with the independent and dependent variables.
- If possible, include a map showing where your study took place.

[Link Back to Part IV. Share— write up or present your findings](#)