

Scientific Presentation in English

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Scientific Communication is Really Important...

- For your academic career
 - To describe your accomplishments and draw attention to your work from your colleagues and peers
 - Publications are not enough
 - Without good communication it will be tough to get funding
- For your career in a commercial / business environment
 - To communicate the progress of company projects and strategy to colleagues, senior management or to potential investors and partners – technical marketing
 - The higher up the organisation you are, perhaps the more important it is
- For your career in public service
 - To make technical and scientific information understandable and useful to legislators and the public.

And there is no escape.....

English is the language of science and technology

The role of English in scientific communication: *lingua franca* or *Tyrannosaurus rex*?

Journal of English for Academic Purposes, Volume 3, Issue 3, July 2004, Pages 247-269

C. Tardy

But this certainly does not mean that native English speakers are automatically good communicators

Something about me

- Graduate student
- University Post-doc and Researcher
- Pharmaceutical Industry & Biotech
 - Project manager and scientific leader
 - A large part of my job is communicating scientific findings to others
- This talk
 - How to present something intangible
- I have no real idea how it is to present in a language other than English !

Core Presentation Skills

- Getting the message over
 - That is why you are up there in front of the audience
- Delivery
 - Language and your spoken presentation to the audience
- Slides, to clarify, support and reinforce your spoken presentation
 - Preparing slides and graphics
 - It is rare to give a talk without slides
 - Use notes if necessary, but with good preparation should not be needed
- Knowing the subject
 - Gives you the confidence to speak with authority

Core Presentation Skills

- Timing
 - Often difficult to judge
 - If you have got your message across then stopping early is fine
 - Too long is never really good
 - Too many slides is a recipe for a poor presentation
- Confidence
- Acting
 - Even if you are not a natural presenter and communicator you can learn to be one
- Don't be too ambitious in what you are trying to communicate

Core Presentation Skills

- Take cues from the audience
 - If they are falling asleep try and do something to wake them up !
 - Usually somebody is sleeping – don't be put off
 - If they are on the edge of the seat then you are doing the right thing
- Not making a complete fool of yourself
 - It cannot happen if you pay even a little bit of attention to the points above

Presenting in English from a Finnish Perspective

- Your English language skills are not the limiting factor
 - But keep the language simple....You are not trying to show off your knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar
- Use a direct and straightforward approach to what you want to say
 - Should be easy...
- Try and keep some tone variation
- Remember to pause now and again
- Try and keep some contact with audience
- Don't read the slides except as a last resort if you get stuck
- Try not to hide, or talk to the screen

Be Organised

- Make sure your slides work on the computer that will be used in the meeting
 - Especially if you have video's or fancy graphics
- The little things
 - Mobile phone off
 - Glass of water
 - Comfortable presenting position
 - Appearance
 - No hangover...

Scientific Presentations in a Business Setting

- The ability to communicate scientific and technical ideas to an audience is just as important in the commercial world, if not more so
 - E.g communicating the progress of a complex project to management
 - Attracting investors such as venture capitalists
 - Selling your project to other companies
- These people are usually putting up money, lots of it, and they really pay attention and ask the tough questions
- They tend to be very interactive presentations
 - Presentation and discussion format
 - Lots of questions
 - Have to stay focused on the message, it is easy to get distracted

Virtual Presentation

- Very common in business settings
- Teleconferences
 - Presenting to a telephone
- Slide sharing tools such as Webex
 - Allows a moderator to manage a Powerpoint presentation with a group for discussion via tele or video conference
- Videoconferencing
 - Presenting to a TV
 - Difficult to see who you are talking to and to connect voices to people you see on the screen
- Clarity of voice, slides, message is even more important
- If it is a really important presentation try and arrange a face to face meeting

Summary

- Preparation
- More preparation
- Know your subject
- Have confidence, you are the expert
- Don't worry too much about the language
- Practice: Take any opportunity you can to give scientific presentations
- Observe experienced speakers and try and learn from them what works well

Thank you

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