Engin100.250 Winter 2018
Oral Presentations

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Oral presentations are subject to a number of constraints. Not the same as a written report given aloud.

Why are these things true?

What do they imply?
Oral presentations: there is a difference…

It’s hard to follow a complicated talk.

The listener cannot go back and revisit material.

People cannot pay attention very long.
Things to recall before you speak

You cannot give all the information in a presentation that you can in a written report.

The audience can only remember 3 or 4 main points from a talk.

A talk must be properly organized to bring out those main points.
Oral presentations require

Organization    Visuals

Language    Practice

*Practice!*
A talk must be

Organized to bring out those main points

Planned so there’s enough time devoted to each topic

Planned so that you meet your time limit
Some old, but good advice

Estimate the number of words

Make an outline

Develop the ideas into paragraphs

Use interesting and clear language

Practice your delivery

Estimate the number of words

Unless you know how many words you you’re allowed (and this means paragraphs) you won’t know how much you can devote to each part of your talk.
Make an outline to organize your text or else…

You won’t use your time efficiently

Your audience will have trouble following you
Break your ideas into paragraphs

This will help you organize ideas

It will help you draw up a talk of the right length

You should know what a paragraph is by now
Use interesting and clear language

Obviously, clear language is better understood

Interesting language-- vivid language-- is more closely listened to
Estimating words

Most people speak between 100 and 150 words per minute

– Why is this important to know?

*Because a properly developed paragraph generally contains between 100 and 150 words.*
Therefore, most people speak about a paragraph a minute

This is useful to know when it comes to planning your talk
How much time do you have for your oral presentations?

12 Minutes
(But what does this mean?)

This means about 12 developed paragraphs or about 1,800 words maximum
A different way to think of this:

A little more than five and a half double-spaced pages of typed text-- and this is the maximum.
Let’s consider the distribution of text

Introduction: a bit

Body: a lot

Conclusion: a bit
Recall that your audience will remember 3 or 4 main ideas.

Where are they discussed?
Possible distribution of text for a twelve minute talk

Introduction (1 paragraph)

Body
   Point A (3 paragraphs)
   Point B (4 paragraph)
   Point C (3 paragraphs)

Conclusion (1 paragraph)
Or this?

Introduction (1 paragraphs)

Body
   Point A (3 paragraphs)
   Point B (3 paragraph)
   Point C (4 paragraphs)

Conclusion (1 paragraph)

*It depends on your presentation.*
What might your main points be?
Some points to recall about speaking

You aren’t alone in fearing public speaking

Stage fright is actually helpful

Even professional speakers suffer from stage fright

People are afraid to speak in public because they haven’t had practice doing it
The key to minimizing stage fright is preparation and practice

*But this doesn’t mean memorization*
To be an effective speaker you must

Prepare

An outline of key phrases

Try doing it on note-cards

Practice

Saying your part aloud several times

Over several days, if you can

Say it to your friends or teammates
Possible key phrases for a talk on lasers

- Laser: acronym “light amplification through stimulated emission of radiation”
- Developed in 1958 at Bell Labs
- Atoms made up of protons, neutrons and Electrons in shells
- Laser light monochromatic, highly directional
- Lasers can have cores of many different materials
- Hundreds of uses: CD players, pointers, eye-surgery
Laser: acronym “light amplification through stimulated emission of radiation”

Visual: text showing abbreviation
Atoms made up of protons, neutrons and electrons in shells

Visual: diagram of atomic structure
Laser light monochromatic, highly directional

visual: diagram of light waves
Lasers can have cores of many different materials.

Visual: labelled photographs of various cores
Practice will help eliminate
Stumbling
Poor diction
Undue nervousness
Some points on presentation itself
Presentation is performance

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJAj2JOfd1Q
An effective speaker needs the goodwill of the audience.

Use interesting and clear language

Clear language is better understood and more easily remembered.

Interesting language-- vivid language-- is more closely listened to.

Vivid language is not abstract.
Use effective gestures

https://decker.com/blog/gestures/
Stand up straight
Vocal quality

Listeners often prefer the richer tones of a speaker’s voice.

These tones are generally found a few steps up from the lowest note the speaker can produce.
Voice and intonation

Try to project
Practice a lot

Practice your diction
Practice a lot

Emphasize properly the sentences you speak
Practice quite a bit
Sentence pitch and stress convey information
Do these mean the same thing?

**Robert** decided to support development of the new product.

Robert decided to **support** development of the new product.

Robert decided to support development of the new product.
Avoid vocal affectations
Make eye contact

Choose someone welcoming to glance at

Shift from person to person

Don’t try to look at everyone
Dress properly to be taken seriously

This will depend on occasion and audience
Be Bold
Summary

Prepare your talk

Practice (but don’t memorize) it

Be bold

Show enthusiasm

Use vivid language

Use good, appropriate visuals