



Great presentations start

... with careful preparation

When you are presenting at a conference, or a seminar at your institution, it will be important for you to be well prepared. Most of us are nervous about public speaking but in most cases it is actually not quite as scary as it may appear. After all, this can be your proud moment when you can show to everyone what you have worked for so hard.

Even though you are the expert in your research area, you will need to prepare carefully for such a presentation. You will know a lot of detail about your research, but you will need to focus on the main and most important points for your talk and leave aside aspects that may be distracting from the main story.

Consider the following:

- 1 Understand the audience. Who will you be talking to and what is the context?
- 2 What is the topic you want to speak about? Focus on one coherent story and don't try to pack too many different things into your presentation. Prepare clean, easy-to-follow slides. Reading slides while listening to a presentation is a lot of cognitive load for an audience, so try to be specific and brief in your slides:
 - > What are the key points of your talk?
 - > Is your storyline clear?
 - > What core data do you have to bring your point across?
 - > What are the conclusions and/or consequences from your research?
- 3 Practise, practise, practise:
 - > Time yourself.
 - > Know the order of your slides and be prepared to cut some out if you need to because your time may be restricted on the day.
 - > Don't learn a script as it may sound boring. Focus on memorising which important points you need to cover.

Tips

- > Start early on the presentation preparation.
- > Give yourself time to practise and ask peers to listen to your talk.
- > Have a clear and concise storyline that is backed up by the data.
- > Think about how you can present your research engagingly and clearly. Don't overload your slides.
- > Time yourself and be flexible in how you present your research so you can be flexible on the day, in case your permitted time is changed.
- > Introduce yourself to the panel chair and have a brief biography ready in case they want to introduce you..