

Announcements



17-Apr-01

CSCI {4,6}900: Ubiquitous Computing

1

Outline

- How to give a good technical presentation



Key points about presentations

- Human attention span is very small
- You've worked on this problem for n months. You cannot tell us everything in 15 minutes
- The goal for any presentation is to give a flavor of your work so that people can read your paper for details.
 - The goal is not to show off that you can write cool code..



Organization

- Motivation
 - Important to tell people why your work is interesting
- Outline
 - How you will organize your talk
- Basic ideas of the work
 - Implementation details
- Results
 - To show that you have achieved what you set out to do
 - Show something that was not intuitive
- Your conclusions
- Future directions



Slide Presentation Style

- Use large serif fonts (Arial, Helvetica etc. at least 24 points)

- Easier to read while projected
- ce vs cē

ae ae

- Avoid complete sentences
- Never use a laser pointer
 - Too much shake
- Watch the time
- Talk to the audience
 - look at the audience



Presentation style

- Avoid covering slides
 - This is not a mystery novel
 - Distracts from your presentation
- Avoid busy slides
- Avoid excessive colors
- Use pictures when appropriate
- Guide your audience to what you want them to see
- Repeat the salient points (not verbatim) so that the audience remembers
- Keep it simple stupid (KISS principle)



How to give a bad presentation – David Patterson

I. **Thou shalt not be neat**

Why waste research time preparing slides? Ignore spelling, grammar and legibility. Who cares what 50 people think?

II. **Thou shalt not waste space**

Transparencies are expensive. If you can save five slides in each of four talks per year, you save \$7.00/year!

III. **Thou shalt not covet brevity**

Do you want to continue the stereotype that engineers can't write? Always use complete sentences, never just key words. If possible, use whole paragraphs and read every word.

IV. **Thou shalt cover thy naked slides**

You need the suspense! Overlays are too flashy.

V. **Thou shalt not write large**

Be humble -- use a small font. Important people sit in front. Who cares about the riff-raff?



How to make a bad presentation ..

VI. Thou shalt not use color

Flagrant use of color indicates uncaredful research. It's also unfair to emphasize some words over others.

VII. Thou shalt not illustrate

Confucius says ``*A picture = 10K words,*'' but Dijkstra says ``*Pictures are for weak minds.*'' Who are you going to believe? Wisdom from the ages or the person who first counted goto's?

VIII. Thou shalt not make eye contact

You should avert eyes to show respect. Blocking screen can also add mystery.



How to give a bad presentation

IX. Thou shalt not skip slides in a long talk

You prepared the slides; people came for your whole talk; so just talk faster. Skip your summary and conclusions if necessary.

X. Thou shalt not practice

Why waste research time practicing a talk? It could take several hours out of your two years of research. How can you appear spontaneous if you practice? If you do practice, argue with any suggestions you get and make sure your talk is longer than the time you have to present it.

- Commandment X is most important. *Even if you break the other nine, this one can save you.*

