

GUIDELINES FOR THE SIP ORAL PRESENTATION

The following guidelines were adopted from Jeff Radel's web page on effective presentations.

(<http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/effective.html>)

The SIP oral presentation should be approximately 11 minutes in length after which you can expect a 3-minute question and answer period. (There will be four or five talks per session so it is very important that your presentation does not exceed 11 minutes. Please practice and time your talk to make sure it is not too long. Because this is a relatively short talk, you need to be clear on your topic. You do not need to present everything you did for your SIP. Include the most important and/or interesting one or two findings, as well as a brief summary of the relevant background literature. Also, remember that redundancy is important in an oral presentation. We used to say, "In any speech, in the introduction, 'you need to tell them what you are going to tell them,' then in the body you, 'tell them,' and finally, in the conclusion, 'you should tell them what you told them.'"

The times listed below are approximate but should help when preparing each section of the talk.

The first four to six minutes:

The literature review should take no more than 6 minutes of the presentation because the audience is more interested in hearing about what you did for your SIP and needs only a **basic review of previous research** in order to understand your study. The amount of time you spend covering previous research will vary depending on the complexity of your research design. End this section by giving a very clear summary of the **purpose of the present study** (i.e., your hypothesis).

The last four - seven minutes:

Spend most of the presentation telling the audience what you did for your SIP. Try to make a smooth transition from the previous section by explaining how your study fits into the existing literature (e.g., the present study attempts to replicate what Smith and Jones (1980) did while controlling for gender bias...). You should follow the same logic you would use when writing a paper in APA style. After the introduction and purpose of the present study, move into a **description of your methods** including the participants and materials. In some cases you may want to include a picture of your apparatus or a copy of the questionnaire participants completed while you describe the method. Do not simply list questions and read them one after another with your back to the audience. Simply use the visuals as examples (e.g., "we asked questions such as x, y, and z" while pointing these out). Once you have provided a brief overview of your methods, **summarize your results using figures or tables**. Do not include too much information, be consistent in terms of figures and tables with respect to font size and color, etc. As stated before, you do not need to present your entire SIP if you ran two or three experiments. Simply choose one or two of the most important and/or interesting pieces of your SIP in order to limit the number of figures and tables. Your audience would rather hear a detailed explanation of one or two crucial slides than one or two sentence overviews of 20 different tables. Be conscious of time when you are going through your slides and try to arrange your results in such a way that you could easily skip over two or three if you are running short on time (e.g., you should skip over one experiment altogether rather than cover your interpretation and discussion in the last 30 seconds). After you have presented your basic results, **interpret and discuss** your

findings for the audience. Be clear and emphasize the "bottom line." Did you have significant findings? If so, review them. If not, were there methodological flaws in your design? Are there one or two possible explanations for your results? Offer suggestions as to what you would do differently in the future if you had to do the study again. End the talk with a **clear, concise summary of your conclusions** (as listed on your last slide).

Visual Aids:

As mentioned earlier, you are encouraged to use Powerpoint for your oral presentation but transparencies are acceptable as well. Powerpoint offers very nice templates that can be used to help you organize your talk. It is also easy to bring in scanned pictures and documents (e.g., an MRI scan, a copy of the survey given to participants, a picture of participants completing a specific task, etc.). The time spent putting your presentation into Powerpoint will help you arrange the material in a logical sequence. **Use high contrast colors for your slides (e.g., large dark text on a lighter background).** Some basic recommendations are to **make slides BIG, SIMPLE, CLEAR, and CONCISE.** A humorous but useful mnemonic to remember when preparing slides for a talk is K.I.S.S. - Keep It Simple Stupid. Although you may choose, recommended fonts and sizes for slides are discussed in the web tutorial (e.g., Times Roman looks nice on paper but is difficult to read on slides). Lastly, note that Powerpoint slides can be printed off as transparencies if you prefer to use overheads instead of the computer for your presentation. However, you will want to change the page orientation from the default (landscape) to letter size **before** you start making your slides! If you are a MacIntosh user, remember to save your presentation in PC format as we have PCs available during the conference.

Finally, remember that retention of information is reduced as the talk proceeds. Thus, if presenting a series of points on a given slide, organize them from the most important to the least important so the audience will remember the most relevant information. Also, remember to repeat and emphasize key points. And lastly, practice, practice, practice. First, practice by yourself to get comfortable with the talk. You may start by writing out your talk verbatim but go through it enough such that you can give the presentation in a conversational style (i.e., do not read your notes). Second, when you are comfortable with the talk, practice with roommates and ask them for constructive feedback on what part of the talk was unclear and for suggestions on where to cut irrelevant material.