

PRESENTATION RULES 1

Introduction

1. In pairs, discuss the outcome of the tasks from previous lesson:

Compare

- what you are good at (you can concentrate on this to make an excellent presentation)
- what you would like to improve (you can learn about strategies and do some practice)

2. Describe some differences between written and spoken way of presenting information on the same topic.

<i>written</i>	<i>spoken</i>

Rule 1: OBJECTIVE

The main objective is to get your message across.

What does it mean? Try to explain:

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To get you message across, try to

- be clear
- be persuasive
- think about the audience

Questions concerning the objectives: 1. WHAT? 2. WHY? 3. WHO FOR?

1. What am I going to talk about? – *suggest some (two) topics for presentations in this course*

2. Why should I talk about it? – *evaluate the topics, explain why they are good/bad*

3. Who for: What do you consider in relation to the audience?

When you answer the three questions, you can use the answers to formulate one sentence – so called **purpose statement**. This helps you to see whether you have a good topic and a realistic aim. It is for you only, and after you have formulated it you can start preparing: you know what, why, who for.

Task 1: Which of these purpose statements could serve as the foundation for a 15-minute presentation at an expert conference in the given field? ¹

- a) I hope to convince my supervisor that the topic My Family is the best and most scientific of all topics, so that I can get credits for a conference presentation.
- b) I hope to clarify the importance of space research with examples of space technology that has changed our everyday lives, so that the audience understands why money invested in this area is not wasted.
- c) I will communicate the greatness of the Impressionist Painting, so that the audience can admire and love it as much as I do.
- d) I am going to introduce the audience to different achievements of scientists in the USA, Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain, and then compare these to the Czech Republic, so that they understand the situation of scientists in this country.

Rule 2: AUDIENCE

Before you start preparing your presentation, carry out **audience analysis**:

- How many people will be there?
- What is their knowledge of the subject?
- Are they expert / non-expert or mixed audience?
- Why are they there and what do they expect to learn from me?
- What are their needs as the audience?
- What are my needs as the speaker?

Task 2: Suggest the audience analysis for the following situations: ²

- a) As a member of an experimental project team, you are going to present a new project in your field to the Dean's Project Committee (5 people) at the Dean's Office. (15 minutes)
- b) As a student or researcher, you are going to present your branch of studies at the Night of Science. (30 minutes)

After you have analysed the audience, you are able to adapt your presentation to them. This adaptation also includes **audience-friendly style**.

Task 3: Compare these two traditions in the style of presenting expert information. Which of these approaches is more important today? ³

- A. *English-language tradition*: ideas organized into a structure, prepared in a style that is understandable, adapted to listeners / readers' needs. If the listeners / readers do not understand, it is the author's fault, the style is not well adapted.
- B. *Czech-language tradition*: ideas of descriptive character, demand for high precision, complicated language. If the listeners / readers do not understand, it is their fault because they do not have enough knowledge.

The audience-friendly (or even conversation) style does not mean the use of inappropriate informal phrases but intelligent formulation of ideas into short sentences and clear complex sentences. Ideally, each listener should feel that you have a dialogue with him/her.

Rule 3: TITLE

Do not forget to think about the title – it is the first thing the audience learns about your presentation

- the title describes your topic, gives a precise idea about what to expect
- influences the decision whether to come to your presentation or not

*Task 4: Certain features are typically avoided when you create a title. Match the features to be avoided with the explanations why.*⁴

To avoid:

- redundant words and phrases such as “a study on” or “an investigation of”
- abbreviations and jargon
- cute or sensational titles
- being too vague or general

Because:

- In order to come to your presentation, the audience should be able to predict the content - almost nobody can predict the content of a presentation titled, e.g. “The Way to Truth” or “A Vital Question”.
- Everybody expects that an academic presentation is based on a reputable study, investigation or research project.
- You want to inform your audience, not to shock them or to increase the selling. Titles such as “Urban Gorilla seen in Glasgow” or “Best Selling Computer Software: Here and Now!” will probably not attract an audience which would like to get unbiased serious information regarding urban gorillas or computer software.
- They may not be the same for different audiences, e.g., CR means the Czech Republic to Europeans, while in America it refers to Costa Rica, etc.

Task 5: Decide which of the following titles would be acceptable for an academic talk and which should be improved.

Gender Issues in Reproductive Health and Promoting Male Responsibility
From Cold War to Cold Peace: Explaining U.S.-French Competition in Francophone Africa
Matter
Pretty Feet Hit the Street
The Impact of Herbivores on Plants in Different Resource Conditions: A Meta-Analysis
An Investigation of Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity
Statistics for ESC in AO, PO and IO
A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison
Health and Schooling Investments in Africa
The Earth
This is research on the Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama.

What is necessary to include in the title are **key words**. They carry the informative meaning and make your work searchable by online tools. The need for being informative allows relatively greater length of the title (15 words is no exception).⁵

Rule 4 STRUCTURE OF ACADEMIC PRESENTATION: OPENING, BODY, CLOSING

The **purpose** of your academic presentation is to share your research work with other scientists. You try to convince the audience that your

- research is important, valid, and relevant to them
- you emphasize the motivation (need) for the work and the outcome of it
- you present just enough evidence to establish the validity of this outcome
- you aim to inform, not to impress

The Opening

The opening of an oral presentation has five components: attention getter, need, task, main message, and outline of the body.

Attention getter

- In a form of a question, an analogy, an anecdote, a quotation, a picture (less specialized audiences require more creative attention getters because they are more distant to the topic, for specialists use just simple link with a familiar context)
- It is a means to focus attention on the need (motivation) for the work presented and link the topic with what the audience already knows
- Effective one is relevant and appropriate, not out-of-place or overdramatic

Task 6 Watch the beginnings of three presentations and identify different forms of attention getters

http://www.ted.com/talks/lee_cronin_making_matter_come_alive.html 0.10 -0.59

http://www.ted.com/talks/adora_svitak.html 0.10 - 0.34

http://www.ted.com/talks/rachel_pike_the_science_behind_a_climate_headline.html 0.15- 0.45

Main message

- Can be one sentence that you want your audience to remember
- It is your main conclusion, perhaps stated in a less technical detail than at the end of the presentation

Preview / Outline

- Comes at the end of the opening
- Outlines the body, not the entire presentation
- Is limited to the main points, not subpoints
- Prepares the audience for the structure of the body, provides a map

Task 7: Follow this opening and identify all the parts. (Opening of a 15-minute conference presentation by John Creemers).⁶

- A. Attention getter (consists of a photograph depicting the syndrome)
- B. Implicit need (namely, to identify the genetic cause of it)
- C. Task (what they did)
- D. Main message (what they achieved)
- E. Outline
- F. Transition to the body

In 1966, two Belgian clinicians published a novel syndrome, which we call now hypotonia-cystinuria syndrome. It is characterized by severe neonatal hypotonia – you can see that on this picture, which was included in their case report – but on top of that all the patients developed kidney stones within the first decade of their life, mostly even multiple kidney stones, and they also displayed growth retardation. Over the years, we have, in our hospital, collected a number of additional patients and, a few years ago, we have been able to identify the genetic cause of this syndrome. What I will show you in the next 15 minutes is how we came to identify the genetic cause of this disease and, since one of the genes affected in this syndrome is a novel protein called PREPL (prolyl endopeptidase-like), I will also show you the preliminary data that we have gathered in the characterization of this protein. But let me start by giving you a bit more information about the syndrome itself.

Homework: Identify the parts of Marie's opening to her presentation

Marie's opening ⁷

From a 10-minute PhD-day presentation on Automated alignment procedure for stitching with a focused ion beam, by Marie Verbist (Universiteit Gent)

I'm sure in your own field of research you have already noticed that things seem to go nano. We've seen a lot about nanomaterials in the presentations this morning, but I'm sure you've also heard about nanomedicine, nanorobotics, nanomechanics... even Apple has an iPod called nano

My field of research is photonics, and this is everything that has anything to do with light. And the nano in nanophotonics indicates that we are working with light on a very small scale: we make very, very small photonics chips. We can imagine the structures on this chip are still larger than nanometers in size. So why do we call it nano photonics? Well, they have to be fabricated with nanometer precision. In my research group, we have an amazing fabrication tool: it has a very high resolution, but only over a very small area.

What we decided to do was to make an alignment procedure that allows us to use this resolution over the entire photonic chip. Before I can talk about this alignment procedure, I'd like to introduce nanophotonics to you and I'll talk about the focused ion beam, which is the amazing fabrication tool that I just mentioned.

And then, in the third part I will explain to you how we developed the alignment procedure. Finally, I'll be able to show you in conclusion the wave-guides that we made by focused ion beam stitching. So first, let's talk about nanophotonics.

1 Štěpánek L., et al, Academic English, Grada, 2011, p.115

2 Štěpánek L., p.116

3 Čmejrková S., Daneš F., Světlá J., Jak napsat odborný text, Leda, 1999, p.31

4 Nemcova, H, English for Biologists, Presentations in Science

5 Štěpánek L., p.163

6 <http://www.nature.com/scitable/ebooks/english-communication-for-scientists-14053993/114017685#headerAndCitation>

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<http://www.nature.com/scitable/resource?action=showFullImageForTopic&imgSrc=content/ne0000/ne0000/ne0000/ne0000/14032747/ECS-03-02-01-Openings.pdf&isPDF=yes>