



How to Give Successful Scientific Talks

Target Group

Doctoral candidates and Postdocs of all disciplines.

Goal

In several exercises you will train your presentation skills in the three essential areas (see below), receive individual feedback, and have a chance to improve.

Fundamentals of Scientific Talks - 2-Days-Training

You receive an overview of the three ingredients to convincing scientific talks:

1. Prepare Clear Content

Many scientific presentations suffer from too little clarity and too much content. The result is a lecturer running through the slides, losing the audience at the very beginning. You can learn how to prepare for a great, clear presentation by setting distinct goals, formulating up to three core messages, and by finding vivid examples and metaphors that make your talk “sticky” and memorable. Further, you should know how to formulate clear sentences that help your audience understanding your main points easily.

2. Design Proper Slides

Today's leading standard for visualization in scientific presentations is PowerPoint: a powerful tool, however, often poorly used. Lecturers frequently try to remind themselves what they wanted to say by reading their own bullets – thereby facing the projection screen instead of their audience. With overfilled, graphically cluttered, visually incoherent slides they try to support their speech. You will receive helpful guidelines for PowerPoint slide design to overcome these shortcomings and be able to apply these during the seminar on your own laptops by improving some existing slides of your former presentations.

3. Be Convincing on Stage

Scientific presentations are often characterized by high level, rather complicated content. The art is to communicate this complex content using simple language and sentence structures. Also, good speech modulation, proper use of pauses, and thoughtful opening and closing sentences are essential for delivering your content well. Finally, your body language is extremely important to communicate your content in a successful way. You will learn about the Do's and Don'ts of body language.

The workshop will allow you to train the skills described above:

1) Create Clear Content

- Brainstorm:
How could I serve my audience most effectively? What could I say?
- Reduce: What exactly do I want to say? What not?
Set a clear goal and up to three core messages.
- Structure your talk appropriately.
- Exemplify: find great examples, metaphors, comparisons, images, etc.

2) Design Proper Slides

- Reduce your content and your visuals as much as possible.
Focus on illustrations and images instead of bullets.
- Apply six important design principles to your slides.
- Know how to deal with fonts, sizes, and an underlying grid.

3) Be Convincing on Stage

- Body language: where to put your hands – and other questions
- Creating contact: eye contact and body movement
- How to speak properly (this seminar does not include a voice training)
- How to involve your audience by including interaction.

The course is a mixture of trainer input, practical exercises, and discussing individual questions. You receive constructive feedback by peers and trainer.

In order to train your individual skills and to receive personal feedback, you already have to have prepared a short presentation that you conduct yourself. This can be a part of a former scientific talk – so please bring your laptop and existing slides for this exercise. The duration of the talk excerpt should be 2.5 to 3 minutes – it can be taken from a longer already existing presentation. Choose the beginning or any interesting part from the body of your former lecture. Choose a part that you want to receive feedback for your delivery. There will not be time for preparation during the course, so come prepared.

Also, send in some slides of an existing presentation (until 2 weeks before the seminar, at most 5 MB, to mayer@mmsc.de) so that the trainer can see how your graphical / slide design skills are developed. You will receive no individual feedback on these slides, but questions are discussed in the seminar.

Lecturer	Dr. Matthias Mayer www.mmsc.de
Date	30.10.2015, 10:00-18:00 h 31.10.2015, 09:00-17:00 h
Workload	18 h
Registration	Via E-Mail to kursprogramm@frs.uni-freiburg.de with the following information: Name, Surname Institute, Faculty Current Career Status
Location	Seminarroom FRS, Friedrichstraße 41-43, 2nd floor
Max. Teilnehmerzahl	5 Postdocs (7 Doctoral Candidates)