


Tips on presentations 2019-02-26



Center of Excellence for Shrimp Molecular Biology and Biotechnology

Tips for presentations at international meetings

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Outline

- My purpose is to give some suggestions based on my experience
- Comments will be confined to technical presentations of research results
- They do not apply to review presentations
- I will give recommendations about 5 things:
 - Contingency plan (safety)
 - Guidelines for topic
 - Paramount importance of time
 - Overall organization
 - Design & Style
 - How to make the presentation

Safety measures

- Always prepare and keep one complete hard copy with you
- This can be used in an emergency such as power or equipment failure
- Send one copy to yourself as an e-mail attachment or keep it in the cloud
- Have one copy on a thumb drive for transfer at the meeting

General guidelines for topic

(same as a manuscript)

- What is new to science and why is it important?
- Decide on a precise "take home message"
- Design an eye-catching title that includes an abbreviated version of that message
- Prepare a logical (not always chronological) order of presentation to support your message
- Select only your relevant research results to support the message and avoid "sidelines"
- Remember the aim is to convince readers to accept your "take home message"
- Consider your final document to see if you would believe it yourself!

Paramount importance of time

- This is your most important constraint
- You **must not** go over your allotted time
- This is considered very rude and inconsiderate
- Should leave 5 min for questions, but this is optional if you need the whole time
- You will need to test this ahead of time
- Roughly, I consider 1 min for 1 slide, excluding the title, end slide and possible headings
- So a 30 min talk with 5 min for questions means about 25 slides maximum
- Put a timer on the lectern and watch it!

Overall organization

- Title slide (don't read it)
- "Thankyou" slide (optional)
- Outline slide (summarize, don't read)
- Background or rationale (keep to a minimum)
- Story slides
 - Keep methods to minimum possible and summarize wherever possible
 - Emphasize results and their interpretation (you don't have much time!)
- Final conclusions slide (Take home message)
- Acknowledgements slide

Design and Style

General guidelines

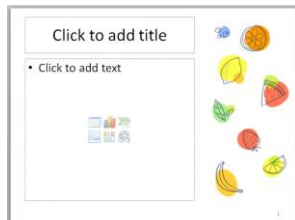
- Choose a simple slide format with maximum room for text and figures
- Avoid clutter – don't put too much on one slide. Adding more slides is better
- Remember that rooms are large and people may be far from the screen
- Make images as large as possible
- Do not use fancy text fonts or fonts smaller than ~40 for titles and ~28 for main text
- Avoid using more than 1 to 2 lines of text for each point
- I no longer use fancy animation effects

Examples of limited space designs



Wide border takes up a major portion of the slide area

Colorful decoration takes up a major portion of the slide area



Choose a simple font

- Arial 40, **Arial 40**, Arial 32, **Arial 32**, Arial 28, **Arial 28**
- Open sans 40, **Sans 40**, Sans 32, **Sans 32**, Sans 28, **Sans 28**
- Century 40, **Century 40**, Century 32, **Century 32**, Century 28, **Century 28**
- Don't use complex or "cute" fonts: **ALGERIAN, AR Blanca, A.R. Decade, Bradley, Comic sans** (People may not take you seriously)
- They are unfamiliar and not easy to read!

Slide master in "View" menu



Whatever you put on this master (including background, logos, etc) will appear in every slide. Take care that these do not use up valuable space

Example of font too small

Font 24/20

Font 28

Font 32/28

Font 36

Stronger biocontrol measures!!

Stronger biocontrol measures!!

Target organ:
• Hepatopancreas (tubule epithelial cells)

Signs of the disease
• No specific distinctive gross signs of the disease
• Reduced feed intake and empty midgut
• Associated with growth retardation

What should we monitor?
• Hatcheries (PL to juvenile)
• Bloodstock
• Rearing ponds
• Potential carriers like live feed

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How to make the presentation

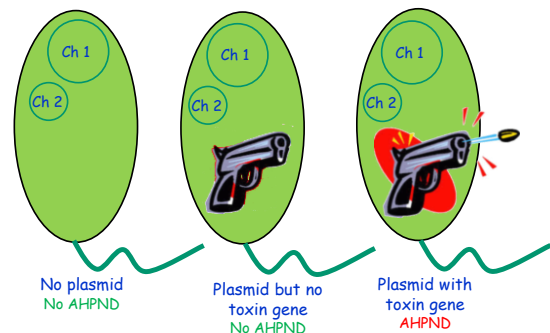
Know & cater to your audience

- Mostly you will be presenting to peers in your field of study so being very technical is OK
- But sometimes you need to simplify for a more general audience of professionals or farmers
- To simplify, may take some thought
- Ernest Rutherford father of nuclear physics, "If you cannot explain your work to your landlady, you don't understand it yourself."
- An example shows how I explained plasmid-based bacterial virulence to the shrimp industry

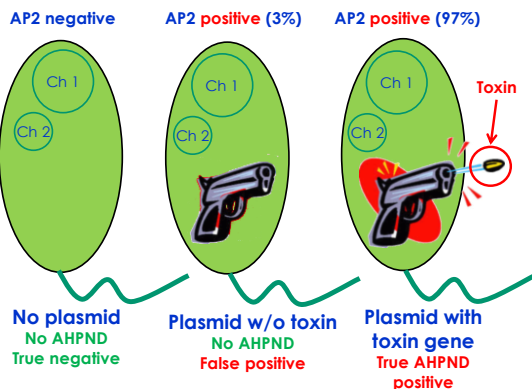
Virulence of AHPND bacteria

- The disease (AHPND) is caused by bacteria carrying a plasmid with a toxin gene
- First detection method (AP2) was for the plasmid
- But some isolates had the plasmid without the toxin gene (about 3% of isolates)
- This gave false positive test results for AHPND
- The second method (AP3) was for the toxin gene
- It gave no false positive results except for mutant toxins (rare)
- After long deliberation, I compared the plasmid to a gun and the toxin to a bullet

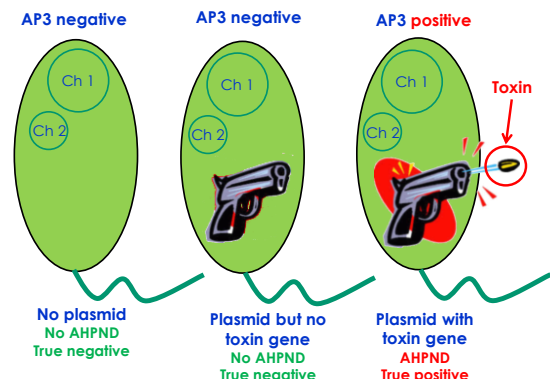
3 *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* types



First AP2 detection method results



Improved AP3 detection method



Tips on presentations 2019-02-26

Face the audience!

- Best to have a computer screen facing you (i.e., facing you same as does the audience)
- You can choose a power-point format that lets you see notes if you wish
- Only turn to the big screen to use a pointer
- Using a mouse pointer if possible, it allows you to remain facing the audience
- Look from one individual in the audience to another, randomly as you talk
- Don't say "ugh" between words or sentences
- If you need a second to think, say nothing and then go on when you are ready

Example of slide with notes

Target organ:

- Hepatopancreas (tubule epithelial cells)

Signs of the disease

- No specific distinctive gross signs of the disease
- Reduced feed intake and empty midgut
- Associated with growth retardation

What should we monitor?

- Hatcheries (PL to juvenile)
- Broodstock
- Rearing ponds
- Potential carriers like live feed

Stronger biocontrol measures!!

Hudson et al., 2003; Tourje et al., 2009; Thiamadec et al., 2016

This disease target organ is the hepatopancreas where it develops in the tubule epithelial cells. There are no specific gross signs of this disease except reduced feed intake and empty midgut in some cases, even though it has been associated with slow growth in *p. monodon*, in *p. vannamei* that association has been only by anecdotes from farmers and companies.

The importance of the results generated in this research that we hope to improve biocontrol strategies by applying them to the industry, specially for hatcheries, broodstocks, rearing ponds and the monitoring of potential carriers.

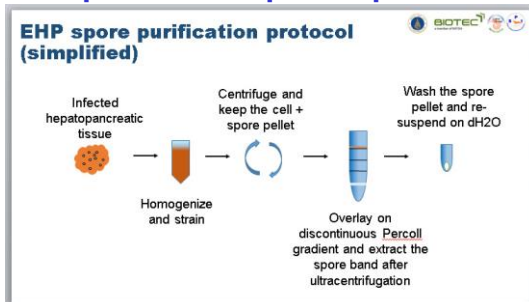
Don't read the talk title & text

- Everyone has the title in their program and they can read it and the text on the screen
- Don't give your name, you have already been introduced
- Don't give your address either since they can read this too
- Just thank the chair for the kind introduction and go to the first slide
- The first slide may be a "Thankyou" slide to be followed by an "Outline" slide
- Or just go directly to the "Outline" slide

Don't read the text of content slides

- Use your slide text as a **guide** and speak naturally as in a normal conversation
- Listeners will read the text on the slides and listen too, so summarize as much as possible
- This is particularly important for methods slides
- Remember, your main objective is the "take home" message based on your results
- Show the key steps in methods but summarize them in what you say

Example of a simplified procedure



Say: "Here is an illustration of the spore purification process by density-gradient centrifugation. Finally, the spores were re-suspended in sterile distilled water."

Questions & Answers

Tips on presentations 2019-02-26

If you allowed time for questions

- Very important to remember, you are still required to stay inside your time limit
- It is **not** an opportunity to extend your time!
- So, make your answer as brief as possible, keeping in mind your time limit
- If not enough time to answer a particular question, say so, and ask to answer in the break
- I.E., "I'm sorry, I cannot give a short answer to that question. Please see me in the break."
- Or, "Very briefly the answer is yes (no). For an explanation why, see me during the break."

Optional for anticipated questions

- If you anticipate particular questions, you may prepare slides to answer them
- Put these slides in your file, after the closing slide, to go there if you need them
- They may help in speeding up and clarifying your answers
- If they end up not being used, nothing is lost

