

# How to Give a *PhD Proposal* Presentation

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(based on Dr Peter Andreae's talk for 489 students)

# Problem Number 1

- It's hard to explain your own work
  - You know so much about it.
  - To you, the big picture is completely obvious.
  - You have lots of detail to cover
  - They don't have a clue what you're doing
  - There isn't enough time

How do you plan and structure the presentation?

[ Start with the problem you are addressing ]

# Problem Number 2

- It's hard to speak in front of people if you are not used to it.  
(and sometimes even when you are)
  - You have to remember so many things at once  
(looking the right direction, not going too fast, clicking the next slide, watching the time, not waving your hands around too much, speaking loudly enough,...)
  - AND, you have to work out what to say next!

How do you make the presenting better & easier?

# Non problem ?

- Won't address
  - tips for how to make impressive slides.
  - tips on powerpoint style

In general, simple is better than fancy,  
Unless your content ***requires*** something fancy.

[ Point out what you are ***not*** doing, but only if the audience is likely to assume that you are doing it. ]

# Outline

- Planning your talk
- Presenting your talk

[ Don't waste time with an outline!  
If you do have one, don't talk to it; just show it ]



# Structuring of your talk

What are the principles?

# Planning / Structuring

- Problem and goal first ; your results later
- "Frontload" your presentation:  
Don't keep big ideas hidden until the end!  
(you may never get there; your audience may go to sleep)
- Present the key ideas and key results
  - leave most details to the paper.
  - simplify if necessary
  - just enough technical detail to communicate what you have done.

# The Planning process

- Start by listing the key ideas
- Make a storyboard
  - one large sheet with all the slide sketched out
  - rearrange and edit
- Only produce slides when the structure is right
- Talk it through to yourself
- Practice with an audience



# How big is a slide?

- How many slides should you have?
- How much should be on a slide?
- slide  $\equiv$  paragraph  $\equiv$  one coherent topic
- make slide complement and support speaking
  - notes are better than sentences
  - don't read out your slides

# Presenting

- what annoys an audience?

# Presentation tips

- Have notes for yourself
- Write out wording for the beginning, just in case.  
(also for any really tricky bits)
- Don't look at the screen:  
look at the audience and the monitor/laptop
- Pointing: how?
- Don't go backwards (just repeat the slide)

# Useful Links to Resources

- <http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Main/PhDFullRegistrationConfirmationPolicy>
- <http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~jrs/speaking.html>
- <http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/um/people/simonpj/papers/giving-a-talk/giving-a-talk.htm>
- [http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/slss/studyhub/handouts/Oral-presentations.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/studyhub/handouts/Oral-presentations.pdf)
- <http://lorien.ncl.ac.uk/ming/Dept/Tips/present/comms.htm>
- [http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/Preparing\\_talks/120.html](http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/Preparing_talks/120.html)