

Essay 3

Effective communicate with a range of audiences

(This is an individual assignment, but your team can all get required feedback in the same session, from the same guest critic, see below).

You will give a presentation about your project. We require you to:

- Spend some time researching tips on giving good presentations. There are lots of resources on giving good talks on the web. We have also given you a handout with some of our favorite tips.
- Write a 600-word essay on:
 - o The best tips you have found in your research (be sure to cite your sources).
OR
 - o The best talk you have ever seen (in person, or on the Web/TV). Why was it so effective? What did you learn from it that was actionable?

Turn in: Your essay

Useful Resources

- How to give a good research talk, Simon Peyton Jones, John Launchbury, John Hughes, SIGPLAN Notices 28(11), Nov 1993. (and the references thereof)
- Mathematical Writing, Donald E. Knuth, Tracy Larrabee, and Paul M. Roberts. tex.oria.fr/typographie/mathwriting.pdf
- The Elements of Style: A Style Guide for Writers (2005), by William Strunk.
- The Elements of Style by William Strunk Jr. & How To Speak And Write Correctly, by Joseph Devlin (2006), BN Publishing,

Tips for Public Speaking

Presentations are mostly practiced by students and professionals, and they are a great way to convey ideas as well as educate and convince people. Giving a presentation is not an easy task; it requires substantial research, organization, public speaking skills, and self-confidence. A good presenter has the ability to engage his or her listeners from beginning to end and compel them to take action (e.g., giving a high presentation grade in CS179E!). Here are some useful tips and tricks for effective presentations, as well as links to related websites.

Organizing Your Presentation

- Choose an appropriate presentation structure: topical, chronological, classification by categories, problem and solution, or cause and effect.
- Divide the body of your presentation into three to five main points.
- The final, concluding slide should include a summary of the main points of the presentation and leave the audience with something that is worth remembering and pondering.

Public Speaking Tips

- Avoid slang and jargon. Exception, if you are sure all the audience knows the jargon, such as a technical conference.
- Use anecdotes and practical examples to make complicated concepts more comprehensible.
- Speak in varying tones and pitches to give emphasis to certain words and ideas.
- Deliver your speech slowly and clearly.
- Make sure that the people sitting at the back of the hall can hear you clearly, but do not speak so loud that it appears as if you are shouting.
- Leave your arms on the podium or by your sides when you are not using them to make gestures.
When gesturing, make sure that it is natural and spontaneous.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- Dress and act professionally---while there are no firm requirements, as a guide, act the same as you would if this presentation was a sales pitch to clients or investors.

Presentation Design

- Do not overload slides with a lot of text. (busy slides)
- Use the PowerPoint Notes (or similar) to remind yourself what to say when a certain slide is being shown.
- The footer should show your team's logo or project name.
- Try to make the length of text lines similar throughout the slide.
- Recommended font for slide title is San Serif, and font size should be 44.

Font size for subtitles should be 28 to 34, with bold font.

- Use dark font over light background and light font over dark background to enhance clarity.
- Use graphics when appropriate, but avoid complex animations unless you really need them.
- (PowerPoint only) You can press “W” or “B” to clear the screen temporarily during your presentation, and resume the presentation by pressing “Enter”.

Charts, Facts, and Statistics

- Use as few numbers as possible during your presentation, preferably, no more than 12 numbers, because they can cause confusion.
- Try not to use more than one number in a sentence.
- Round numbers up to the nearest whole number.
- Use a smaller font to cite sources for statistics.
- Label all your charts clearly.
- Numbers in charts can be difficult to view and understand. Try to find ways other than columns and rows to present your data.