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**Aiming To The Best Oral Presentation Of Your Research**

I understand. I know. You’ve been working on your research for months, and now that it’s finished, you want to make the best oral presentation. Let´s throw some light on the subject.

First of all, you must remember that an oral presentation is different from a written presentation. The oral presentation should be abstract, concise and to the point whereas the written paper can be as long and detailed as necessary to fully explore the subject.

Last but not least, do not even think of opening PowerPoint until you have organized your ideas and decided on your main points.

**Regarding content,** students often think they need to explain every single thing they know.  This might not always be true.  Giving a talk is a great opportunity to think about the big picture rather than focusing on details.  This can be hard if you are immersed in the specifics of your project.

Here you are a useful tip. Step back for a moment to before you became the expert on your particular topic:

* What piqued your interest?
* Why did you start asking the questions you asked?

Now step into the future. When you look back on this research…

* what will you remember as the most interesting or compelling thing you learned?
* were there surprises?

Now you are ready to ask yourself:

* What are the points I want to convey?
* What do I want the audience to learn?
* When audience members remember my talk the following day, what main point do I want them to remember?

Depending on your topic, you may need to provide background information so that the audience understands the significance of your inquiry.  Be judicious in the amount of information you give, and do not let this discussion get you off track.  Once you’ve provided sufficient background, bring the focus back to your research by reminding the audience of your research question.

**Regarding** **organization**.  Your talk must have a beginning, middle, and end.  You need to:

**(1)** introduce yourself

**(2)** present your research question and why it matters

**(3)** describe how you conducted your research

**(4)** explain what you found out and what it means

**(5)** conclude with a summary of your main points.

**Regarding the use of effective presentation software,** we must remember that giving a class presentation can be stressful under the best of circumstances. However, the effective use of presentation software to organize and structure the content of your work can help ease your anxiety. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

* State no more than three main points on a slide. Slides that have too many words on them are ineffective because audience members feel they have to hurry and read everything before you move to the next slide. This means they're more focused on finishing reading the slide than what you are saying. Remember that the slides are intended to supplement and enhance what you are saying, not to replace it.
* Give your audience time to take notes. Pausing briefly before moving to the next slide also gives you the opportunity to collect your thoughts before continuing to the next point. As noted above, this is important if a slide has a lot of information or the content is especially important.
* Don't read from the slides! Audience members really, really hate this. Summarize or explain what's on a slide. Only selectively read direct quotes or statements when you want to highlight something important or to emphasize a significant issue.
* Make sure your audience can see the screen. Think about where are you standing. Do not stand in front of the screen. If there is no angle where everyone can see, then move around before moving to the next slide [for example, point to something for emphasis].
* Don't overcrowd your slides with too much detail. Using bright colors, pictures, and graphics can make your slides more interesting, but be aware of the fact that certain color combinations can be very hard to read from a distance. It may look fine on a computer screen, but projected in a large format, it can be overwhelming to the eye.
* I know you may be tempted to spend more time on producing creative graphics than on the actual talk, but remember: if your talk is poor, no amount of fancy graphics will save it!
* Remember that PowerPoint or Prezi may look great, but if the technology goes wrong, it's a good idea to print out a handout as a backup just in case. If the audience is too large to do this, ensure that your notes are sufficiently detailed so that you can talk about your topic without relying on the slides.

**Regarding text guidelines for presentation slides,** here you are some basic guidelines to remember when composing your presentation slides. Most of this is common sense, but cutting and pasting text, moving things around, and revising content over time can create errors, so keep these general guidelines in mind when reviewing the final draft of your presentation.

* Use the same text colors and fonts throughout.
* Display graphic images in the same style.
* Keep the background consistent and subtle.
* Be sure text contrasts well with the background.
* Generally use no more than six words per a line.
* Generally use no more than six lines per a slide.
* Avoid long sentences unless it is an important quotation.
* Larger font or bolded text indicates more important information.
* Font size generally ranges from 18 to 48 point.
* Fancy or cursive fonts can be hard to read.
* Words in all capital letters are hard to read.
* Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.
* Limit punctuation marks.

**Regarding strategies to highlight a particular point during your presentation,** these include capitalizing text, bolding text, or using a bright [but readable] color to contrast against the regular text. It's also appropriate to use italics to convey a direct quote. However, follow the general rule that less is more; use short declarative statements or as few words as possible to convey the meaning of what you are saying. Unlike research papers, presentation slides do not have to adhere to strict sentence grammar and paragraph rules.

In case you have one, it will always be eye-catching to use a laser pointer.

**To conclude,**

here you are some extra tips to wrap your great work up:

* Don’t spend extra time on making a fancy PowerPoint presentation with moving images and graphics unless they are vital for communicating your ideas.
* Do be prepared to give your talk even if technology fails.   If your charts don’t look quite right on the screen, or you forget your flash drive, or there’s a power outage, or half the audience can’t see the screen, you should still be able to make an effective presentation.
* Tone.  It is best to approach your prepared talk as a somewhat formal occasion. Treat your audience—and your topic—with respect.  Even if you know everyone in the room, introduce yourself.   Don’t address audience members as “you guys.”  Dress neatly.  Most of all, share your enthusiasm for your subject.
* Practice.  Practice speaking slowly and clearly.  If you want to emphasize an important point, repeat it.  Practice speaking slowly and clearly.
* You must not read your talk. On the contrary, you should speak it out loud enough times that you know when there are points that tend to trip you up, where you might have a tendency to throw in something new and get off track, and whether some of your transitions are not smooth enough.
* Time yourself.  Make cuts if you need to.

**Do not forget…**

**… to practice again!**

**Here you are an example of an outline…**

**Introduction**

*Good morning, my name is \_\_\_\_.  I am a \_\_\_-year student at I.E.S. Martín Rivero in Ronda.  It will be a pleasure to talk to you today about my research on \_\_\_\_\_.*

**Context of research**

*I had the opportunity to join our teacher \_\_\_\_’s lab, where the research focus is\_\_\_\_.*

*This is research for my 2017/18 Piisa Project ….*

*I got interested in this area because ….*

**Research question and significance**

* *I wanted to find out \_\_\_\_\_\_\_[insert your research question].*
* *This is an important question because \_\_\_\_\_. OR This question interested me because \_\_\_\_\_\_.*

**Research methods/design**

* *I thought the best way to answer this question would be by \_\_\_\_\_\_.*
* *I chose this method because….*

**Research activity**

*Here’s what I did:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

**Results**

*Here’s what I found out:  \_\_\_\_\_\_.*

**Significance of results/where this research might lead**

* *This result matters because….*
* *Now that I’ve learned this, I see that some other questions to ask are….*

**Conclusion / Summary of main points**

*I set out to answer \_\_\_\_\_\_ [research question] by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [research methods].  And I discovered that \_\_\_\_\_\_ [brief statement of results].  This was interesting because \_\_\_\_\_ [significance]/This will help us understand \_\_\_\_.*

**Acknowledgments**

* *I am grateful to my teacher, Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, for his/her guidance.…*
* **Questions**

*I would be happy to take your questions.*