

**ПЕРВОЕ ВЫСШЕЕ ТЕХНИЧЕСКОЕ УЧЕБНОЕ ЗАВЕДЕНИЕ РОССИИ**



**МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РОССИЙСКОЙ  
ФЕДЕРАЦИИ**

**федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение  
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«САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГСКИЙ ГОРНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»**

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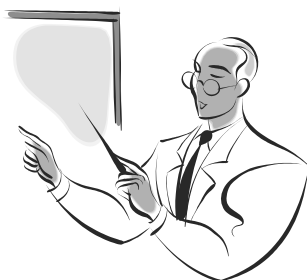
**МЕТОДИЧЕСКИЕ РЕКОМЕНДАЦИИ  
ДЛЯ ПРАКТИЧЕСКИХ ЗАНЯТИЙ ПО ДИСЦИПЛИНЕ**

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**INTRODUCTION**



*From postgraduate course to retirement, giving presentations is an important part of scientific life. In the course of that life, scientists generally progress from “entrance” poster presentations, to short oral presentations, to longer invited lectures.*

*A good scientist also must be a good communicator. All the brilliant research of a lifetime is of little use if the investigator cannot effectively explain new findings to his or her colleagues.*

*As a post-graduate student you will have many opportunities to give a presentation on your research work to your peers and faculty.*

*The goal of this educational book is to provide you with information on how to prepare and give an effective presentation in English in the international conferences.*

***I. Answer the following questions:***

1. Have you ever participated in any international conferences or congresses?
2. When did you last take part in a conference?
3. Where was the conference held?
4. What problems were considered and discussed?
5. How many participants attended the conference?
6. Whose presentation was of particular interest?
7. What problem did it deal with?
8. Did you present a paper at the conference?
9. What was the time limit?
10. Why is it necessary for a scientist to know foreign languages?

***II. Discuss the following questions:***

1. What is the main purpose of any presentation?
2. What types of presentations do you know?
3. Why do scientists give oral presentations? Studies show that we retain much more of what we see than what we hear. If so, why give oral presentations at all? Why not simply prepare handouts, distribute them to an audience, wait while the information is read, and call for questions?
4. What is an effective presentation? And how would you describe a bad one?
5. What makes giving a presentation difficult?

***III. Read text 1 and find answers to the questions that you could not answer or some ideas you did not take into consideration before.***

**TEXT 1**

Presentations have one and only one purpose, viz. to inform about your research work and ideas and your contribution to the science in your field.

There are different types of presentations, for example by manner of delivery we can distinguish oral and poster presentations. Oral presentations are interactive experiences between

the audience and the speaker. The speaker presents herself or himself, as well as the talk, to the audience. The speaker and the audience exchange signals. A speaker brings the subject to life for the audience through personal involvement and familiarity with it. Good interaction with the audience helps the delivery and aids the retention of the material by the audience.

On the other hand, the audience has an opportunity to “meet” the speaker. For some members of the audience, there can be excitement in personally hearing a recognized authority in a given field.

Good presentation can improve a scientist’s standing within professional community, establish possible future collaborations or even get funding for his/her research if a presentation is given to potential funders.

Most people fail to give a good presentation because they really don’t know how effective presentations are measured. According to some of the world’s best presenters, effective presentations can be measured using the following four factors:

25% Message

25% Words & Images

40% Rapport

10% Retention

**Message** – this is the purpose of the presentation. It may be to release your latest research, or to get funding. But you can’t just expect your message alone will sell. Some of the best ‘ideas’ in the world have not worked because the presenter thought that relying on the great idea was enough. “The idea is so good it will sell itself”.... does not work! Having a strong, simple message makes for a strong effective presentation.

**Words and Images** – how you deliver your message is as important as the message itself in making an effective presentation. This is about what you say and how you use visuals. Most scientific presentations fail right here. They don’t realize that most people, including the world experts, don’t want to be blasted with five syllable jargon, acronyms and complex charts and graphs. This is probably the one area in which we all need to concentrate to really make an effective presentation.

**Rapport** – the most important factor in measuring presentations is how the audience interacts with the presentation. If they just sit back and snore, then obviously the presentation was ineffective. Remember the last person you considered to give a great presentation. I bet that they have people smiling, clapping, laughing, nodding etc. They created an audience interaction that did not interfere with their message or words, but added strength to their presentation.

**Retention** – how much of the presentation do you, as a member of the audience, remember? If you leave a presentation having no idea what it was about, then the presentation was ineffective. If you leave with a good idea, some action or even some knowledge that you may never use, then you have retained some of the speaker’s message. This is a good sign that the speaker gave an effective presentation. During your next conference, try and mark presenters using these factors and see if your score reflects what you know to have been effective presentations.

## TEXT 2

### Planning your Presentation

*When planning your presentation, there are several things that should be considered:*

*Where will your presentation occur?*

*What are the advantages and disadvantages of the venue?*

*What does your audience already know about your topic?*

*What is the time available for the presentation?*

*What visual aids are available?*

***1. Read the following tips for planning your presentation and answer the questions:***

1. Can you use the manuscript of an article for your scientific presentation?
2. How should you choose the title for your presentation?
3. What has to be submitted to the organizers of the scientific meeting before the conference?
4. What is important to remember when preparing the text of your presentation?
5. What are the objectives for using visual aids?

Be clear about your purpose. Remember you are writing for the ear, not the eye. Writing a presentation is nothing like writing a scientific paper! People do not speak the way they write. It requires a set of different words, expressions and grammar. It is not something you read out loud. It is something you speak about from the heart.

The manuscript of an article (as submitted for publication) should not be used as such for a scientific presentation. The difference between speaking and writing is the same as the difference between hearing and reading. A reader chooses his own pace; the listener must accept the pace chosen by the speaker. Listening to the news on television is different from reading the news in a newspaper.

To change a written scientific paper into an oral presentation, the presenter must follow three “S words”: Select, Synthesize, and Simplify. Select from the written article the points to present. Synthesize the information in the article to package it in the limited time available. Simplify the presentation of the data, so that it can be easily followed and understood by the audience.

In the planning stage, the title of the presentation has to be decided and an abstract has to be submitted to the organizers of the scientific meeting. A good title can be defined as the fewest possible words that adequately describe the contents of the presentation. The abstract can attract or put off the audience. The abstract is the part of the presentation that will be published in the conference programme. A good abstract should be a miniature version of the presentation. The abstract should be sent to organizers before the deadline and in the format and length requested.

In preparing the text of a scientific presentation:

- Avoid too much detail and resist the temptation to overload the presentation with information.
- Avoid jargon and abbreviations, unless they are clear to all the audience.
- Aim at the average person in the audience.
- Use plain English. Use simple language and active verbs that are clear and concise. Simplify your phrases. Tighten your sentences. Never use a long word when a short one will do. Avoid tongue twisters or words that are hard to say. Do not use terms you do not understand. Repetition is important.
- Use analogies, illustrations, and metaphors; try to paint pictures with words. Use “memory tools” if at possible – for example, acronyms, visual aids, and mnemonics. Present a review at the beginning of the session, and a summary at the end.
- A good talk has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Make every word count.

It has been said that we remember 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, but between 50% and 75% of what we see and hear. A Chinese proverb says “A picture is worth a thousand words”. Visual aids are not an objective in themselves. They are used to serve one or more of the following objectives:

- holding the attention of the audience
- presenting the data in a clear way
- delivering the presentation without having to read from notes.

Commonly used visual aids include slides, overhead transparencies and computer-assisted presentations.

### **TEXT 3**

#### **Structure of a Presentation**

- I. Read text 3 and answer the following questions:
  1. What are the main parts of the presentation?

2. What is the body of the presentation? What information is presented there?
3. What do you need to consider as you develop the outline and write the body of your presentation?

The hallmark of any successful scientific talk is clarity. To achieve clarity, the talk must be well organized and logically structured. Most presentations are divided into 3 main parts (+ questions):

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BODY</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>
	<b>Q&amp;A</b>

In presentations, there is a golden rule about repetition:

***Say what you are going to say, say it, then say what you have just said.***

In other words, use the three parts of your presentation to reinforce your message. In the introduction, you tell your audience what your message is going to be. In the body, you tell your audience your real message. In the conclusion, you summarize what your message was.

The introduction is a very important - perhaps the most important - part of your presentation. This is the first impression that your audience have of you. You should concentrate on getting your introduction right. You should use the introduction to:

1. welcome your audience
2. introduce your subject
3. outline the structure of your presentation
4. give instructions about questions

The body is the 'real' presentation. If the introduction was well prepared and delivered, you will now be 'in control'. You will be relaxed and confident. The body should be well structured, divided up logically, with plenty of carefully spaced visuals. The depth and scope of the scientific content are determined in large part by the audience profile and, most importantly, by the time allotted you.

Once you've prepared the body of the presentation, decide how you will begin and end the talk. Make sure the introduction captures the attention of your audience and the conclusion summarizes and reiterates your important points. Use the conclusion to:

1. Sum up
2. Thank your audience
3. Invite questions

During the conclusion of your presentation, reinforce the main ideas you were hoping to communicate. Remember that listeners won't remember your entire presentation, only the main ideas. By reinforcing and reviewing the main ideas, you help the audience remember them.

## **TEXT 4**

### **Assessing Your Audience**

An extremely important part of effectively communicating what you know is tailoring your presentation to your audience's needs and level of understanding. The first step in preparing an oral presentation, then, is to learn as much as possible about your audience.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. How large will the group be?
2. Who are the members of your audience?
3. How should you plan the presentation for a specialist audience, a generalist audience or a mixed audience?
4. What does the audience want or need to know?
5. Why is your audience attending your presentation?

Pre-assessment is crucial to a successful presentation. Knowledge of your audience is an important prerequisite in making decisions about the content, format, language and style of your presentation, and vital in connecting with your audience.

Most audiences should be addressed in layers: some are experts in your sub-area, some are experts in the general area, and others know little or nothing. Who is most important to you? Can you still leave others with something? For example, pitch the body to experts, but make the forecast and summary accessible to all.

You need to build a warm and friendly relationship with your audience. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you are enthusiastic your audience will be enthusiastic too. And be careful to establish eye contact with each member of your audience. Each person should feel that you are speaking directly to him or her. This means that you must look at each person in turn - in as natural a way as possible. This will also give you the opportunity to detect signs of boredom, disinterest or even disagreement, allowing you to modify your presentation as appropriate.

Audience attention span is short, so break up long sections of information with questions, feedback, activities, and repeat important points.

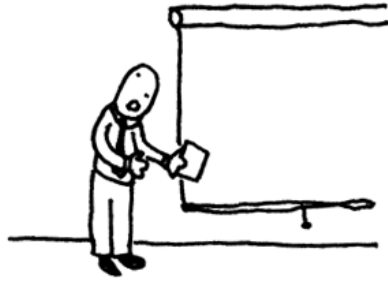
You'll probably never again meet the vast majority of the audience, so this talk is the one and only chance you have to make an impression. Don't mess it up! In the worst case, they will remember you as the one who gave that particularly bad talk. In the mediocre case, you'll not leave a trace in their brains, and in the best case, they will remember you and your subject and what kind of work you've done.

***I. How to keep your audience interested? Study the following recommendations and put them in the corresponding columns:***

<b><i>Dos</i></b>	<b><i>Don'ts</i></b>
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**In order to keep your audience interested you should ...**

- hide behind the podium
- begin with a joke or humorous story
- project a cartoon or colorful visual
- maintain eye-contact with the audience
- keep your face motionless
- be enthusiastic
- modulate your voice
- look friendly
- stare at your advisor/at the screen/at the ceiling
- show your back to the audience
- ask questions to stimulate thinking
- use hand gestures
- stand like a statue
- keep your hands in your pockets
- read your slides like a script
- use a pointer (laser or otherwise)
- create clearly labeled, simple graphics.
- write whole sentences in your graphics and slides
- wave a laser pointer around the screen or point it into the eyes of your audience
- keep to your structure
- tell jokes about other countries, nations, races
- use jargon and slang



and now, let's dim the lights, so i can show you computer slides and read the exact text of the slides to you

## TEXT 5 Presentation Delivery

### *I. Discuss the following questions:*

1. Have you listened to charismatic speakers who gain and maintain the attention of the audience? Can you explain a recipe for success of the experienced presenters?
2. Have you also encountered speakers who quickly put an audience to sleep? What were the reasons for that?

### *II. Read text 5 and answer the following questions:*

1. Why is it important to practice delivering the presentation?
2. What delivery methods do you know? What are their advantages and disadvantages?
3. What do you think the best delivery method is? What do you usually use?

Delivery is the speaker's interaction with the audience. Good interaction with the audience helps the delivery and aids the retention of the material by the audience. You present yourself as well as the subject matter every time you stand in front of an audience. This is not to say that a polished delivery is more important than content, but how well you present your material directly impacts how well it is received.

Most people spend hours preparing a presentation but very little time practicing it. When you practice your presentation you can reduce the number of times you utter words and phrases like, "um," "well," and "you know." These habits can easily diminish a speaker's credibility. You can also fine-tune your content to be sure you make your most important points in the time allotted.

But in addition to planning the content of your presentation, you need to give advanced thought to how you want to deliver it. There are various delivery methods, for instance:

- speaking from memory
- use cards to guide you
- read from a script
- use a combination of methods

**Speaking from Memory.** A distinct advantage of speaking from memory is your ability to speak to the audience without relying on notes or a script. This allows you the flexibility to move away from the podium and to maintain eye contact with the audience. However, speaking from memory has disadvantages, too. Presentations from memory often sound rehearsed and the

possibility exists that you'll forget an important point, present information that's inaccurate, or completely lose your train of thought.

**Speaking from Notes.** Many people like to speak from notes. Typically these notes are either on cards or paper in outline form and contain key ideas and information. The benefit of delivering a presentation from notes is that you sound natural rather than rehearsed and you can still maintain relatively good eye contact with the audience. The down side is that you might not express your key ideas and thoughts as well as you may have liked had you planned your exact words in advance.

**Speaking from Text.** Speaking from text involves writing your speech out, word for word, then basically reading from the text. As with speaking from memory, an advantage of this method is that you plan, in advance, exactly what you're going to say and how you're going to say it. A disadvantage is that you might appear to the audience to be stiff, or rehearsed. You will need to make lots of eye contact and speak with expression to maintain the audience's level of interest.

**Using a Combination of Methods.** You may find the best method to be a combination of all three. For instance, experts suggest you memorize the first and last ten minutes of your talk so that you can speak flawlessly and without notes. Notes may be suitable for segments of your presentation that you know very well, for example, relating a personal story. Finally, speaking from a text might be appropriate when you have quotes or other important points that you want to make sure you communicate accurately and completely. You can make a smooth segue to written text by saying something like: "I want to read this quote to you verbatim, to ensure that I don't distort the original intent."

*Studies of interpersonal communication show that:*

- 55% comes from facial expressions and body language
- 38% comes from vocal quality or tone of voice
- 7% comes from content, the actual meaning of the words.

*Scientifically trained audiences will probably absorb somewhat more than the general population from content and a little less from the other two factors. But to be most effective, the scientific speaker needs to develop a delivery style that incorporates good body language, pleasant facial expressions, and a confident, yet relaxed, tone of voice*

***1. Read the following texts 6-8 and choose the most useful recommendations concerning the above mentioned factors. Discuss them in pairs.***

## **TEXT 6**

### **Voice**

Using your voice effectively can have a great impact on your delivery. The best speaking voice is conversational, natural, and enthusiastic. Speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone in the room, but vary the volume of your voice to maintain interest and emphasize key points.

Avoid using vocal fillers such as: like, um, er, etc. Silence is better and can actually help the pace of your presentation, use it to your advantage by taking purposeful pauses to emphasize points or transitions.

Changing the tone of your voice has similar effects. The important point is not to speak in the same, flat, monotonous voice throughout your presentation - this is the voice that hypnotists use to put their patients' into trance!

Speak loudly, clearly, and not too quickly. You will automatically sound more confident and more prepared. There's no point in giving a presentation if the audience can't even understand or hear what you are saying. If you have a low-volume voice then organize a microphone.



Non-native speakers should practise their English. Chances are high that native speakers can understand you, but other non-native speakers, especially from different language families, can have considerable problems.

## **TEXT 7**

### **Language**

Use language that's appropriate for the audience. Don't try to impress them by using words they don't understand. If your subject is new to audience members, be certain to explain jargon they might not understand.

Also, be certain to use your best grammar. If you want your audience to understand your message, your language must be simple and clear. Use short words and short sentences. Use active verbs instead of passive verbs. Active verbs are much easier to understand. They are much more powerful. Consider these two sentences, which say the same thing:

1. Toyota sold two million cars last year.
2. Two million cars were sold by Toyota last year.

Which is easier to understand? Which is more immediate? Which is more powerful?

## **TEXT 8**

### **Gestures and Body Language**

What you do not say is at least as important as what you do say. Your body is speaking to your audience even before you open your mouth. Your clothes, your walk, your glasses, your haircut, your expression - it is from these that your audience forms its first impression as you enter the room. Generally speaking, it is better to stand rather than sit when making a presentation.

Be aware of and avoid any repetitive and irritating gestures. Minimize gestures like pacing back and forth, rocking back and forth, playing with coins in your pocket, wringing your hands, and other types of fidgeting. These gestures not only signal that you are nervous, but they are distracting to the listener, too.

Use positive facial expressions such as smiles, expressive eyes, and looks of empathy and encouragement to communicate feelings and emotions.

Use quick and energetic movements of your hands and arms to add expression to your talk. Maintain the attention of the audience by making your movements unpredictable.

#### ***I. Try to write some presentation style tips. Make use of the following words and word combinations:***

dress in a professional manner, expensive clothes, look well groomed, hair-do, be influenced by the appearance of the speaker, dangling jewelry, distract from, wear glasses, make-up, wear a suit and a tie, closed shoes

## **TEXT 9**

### **Don't Run Overtime**

#### ***I. Answer the following questions:***

1. How can a presenter make sure that he/she doesn't exceed the time?
2. What is the generally accepted rate for easy hearing and understanding (a number of words a minute)?
3. How many slides can a presenter show during a presentation?

The short time allocated (typically 8-9 minutes with an additional 1 minute for questions) makes this the most difficult talk to prepare for a scientific presentation. Granted, it is difficult to

edit what might represent a life's work into 20 to 30 minutes, or a year's research in to 9 minutes: but remember that other speakers face the same dilemma and most somehow manage it.

It is rude and egotistical to exceed your allotted time. Running overtime also suggests a lack of preparation and experience. A good chairperson can justifiably be quite abrupt with a speaker who exceeds the allotted time. The speaker who exceeds his allotted time imposes not only on his audience, but also on all the speakers who come after him.

Never try to squeeze your 30-minute talk into a 20-minute speaking slot. Speaking as fast as you can and flashing through your visual material at the speed of light is not the way to condense your talk into the specified time. Your audience will be annoyed and will absorb little of your presentation.

A pleasant average rate of delivery is not more than 120 words a minute. A word processor can give the exact word count of a written presentation. A double spaced typewritten page is about 240 words. For a ten minute presentation, plan on no more than five pages of double-spaced text.

A general rule is one slide per minute if the slide contains information, and one slide every 5-10 seconds if the slide contains only titles, key words, or is designed just to remove another visual from the screen. Having to skip slides during the presentation, because the slides are too many, means that preparation of the presentation was poor.

When you are one minute from your time limit, you can say the following and go straight to the conclusions: "If you continue with the details or data as I have been describing them, you finally arrive at this clear set of conclusions."

Rehearsal is the key to making sure that you will deliver the presentation without exceeding the time. Even very experienced speakers rehearse their presentations. You can rehearse on your own, or with the help of colleagues.

Rehearsals are also utterly essential to timing your talk properly. Your goal is to achieve the comfortable, confident, conversational style considered good form in scientific circles without running overtime.



## TEXT 10

### Visual Aids

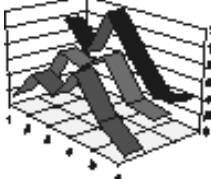

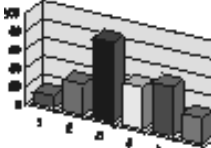
Of all the information that enters our brains, the vast majority of it enters through the eyes. 80% of what your audience learn during your presentation is learned visually and only 20% is learned aurally. The significance of this is obvious:

- visual aids are an extremely effective means of communication
- non-native English speakers need not worry so much about spoken English - they can rely more heavily on visual aids.

It is well worth spending time in the creation of good visual aids. But it is equally important not to overload your audience's brains. Keep the information on each visual aid to a minimum - and give your audience time to look at and absorb this information.

Apart from photographs and drawings, some of the most useful visual aids are charts and graphs. **Piecharts** are circular in shape (like a pie). **Barcharts** can be vertical or horizontal. **Graphs** can rise and fall.

***1. Match the visual aids with their names:***

1.		
2.		
3.		

When you design slides remember that all information presented visually should be brief and concise. It must be should be presented in the most comprehensible format and edited to minimum number of words possible.

**Keep your text simple.** Do not use too many words on a single screen. Use key words and simple phrases, excluding all but the most essential information.

**Text and background should contrast strongly**, creating a very readable combination.

**Limit the number of slides.** A good rule of thumb is one slide per minute.

**Display Time for Slides.** Always leave a slide on the screen for at least 30 seconds.

**50-word Limit, fonts, and colors**

- Each screen should contain about 50 words, no more than 70, max.
- Never use fonts smaller than 16 pt (this is 18 pt.), always use bold.
- Never use more than three colors (black + two others)
- Never use any superfluous characters, symbol, clip-art, etc.

One of the most common errors seen in PowerPoint presentations created by the inexperienced presenter is an overuse of special effects, sounds, animations, and other distracting "gadgets." Although they may be cute, such things can become tiresome and even annoying if not used judiciously.

So do not over-use visuals. Use visual aids to emphasize important points and add interest to your presentation—don't put every word of your entire presentation on them. The visuals are not the presentation, their purpose is simply to summarise or illustrate your main points.

*Discussion Activity*

*Familiarity with your subject and confidence in your research is not enough to give a good oral presentation. Those factors can, in fact, work against giving a good talk. They can produce a false sense of security, make you careless in your preparation, and let you take too much for granted with your audience.*

*You are speaking because you have knowledge worth sharing; however, effective communication of this information requires that you are a reasonably competent public speaker.*

***Comment on the following quotations. What problem do they deal with?***

***"There are two types of public speakers: those that are nervous and those that are liars"***  
*Mark Twain*

*"The human brain is a wonderful organism. It works from the day we are born until the moment we stand up to speak in public."*

*Financial Times*

## **TEXT 11**

### **Do you have a Fear of Public Speaking?**

Public speaking is a common human fear. Of all speaking situations, professional talks can understandably be the most stressful because colleagues, peers, current and potential bosses, and funding-agency representatives will be judging you and your presentation.

Most people are a little nervous when they speak in public. In fact, a little nervous energy can enhance a performance or presentation. It is important to control this nervous energy, however, so that it remains a positive motivating force rather than a debilitating force. Extra energy can work against you rather than enhance your presentation. You can experience tension, jitters, fidgets, dry mouth, tight throat, and your body can become completely disabled.

It is normal if you are nervous. The answer is to pay special attention to the beginning of your presentation. First impressions count. This is the time when you establish a rapport with your audience. During this time, try to speak slowly and calmly. You should perhaps learn your introduction by heart. After a few moments, you will relax and gain confidence.

#### ***I. Answer the following questions:***

1. What are your fears when giving a scientific presentation?
2. Can you name some of the physical symptoms of being nervous?
3. What usually helps you to feel more relaxed and confident during your scientific presentation?

#### ***II. Comment on the following statements:***

1. By running away from your fears you actually run right back into them.
2. Stage fright occurs because you are more concerned about yourself than your audience.
3. If you make it a habit to face your fear of public speaking it won't bother you any more.  
The only solution is ...just do it.

#### ***III. Think of your personal experience and make a list of some tried and proven tips to overcome your fear of public speaking. Discuss your tips with your fellow students.***

#### **Joke**

- You look like you saw a ghost. What's up with that?
- I've got to give a huge presentation for work today in front of 20 top execs from the company.
- What's the big deal? You know your stuff.
- Yes, but I have big-time stagefright. At the end of my presentation the execs will asking me all kinds of questions. I freeze up when I have to think on my feet.
- Don't psych yourself out. You'll be fine.
- That's easy for you to say. You're not the one who has to give the speech.
- If you get nervous just picture the audience in their underwear. Apparently that helps.
- I'll do that only as a last resort.
- Why?
- The execs are mostly men in their 50's...

## **TEXT 12**

### **Disastrous Presentations**

***I. Think of presentations you have attended that had disastrous or catastrophic events. In addition to nervousness, what do you think made these presentations disastrous?***

**II. David Lodge in his campus novel *Small World* (1984) portrayed the life of a university professor as one long round of jetting to conferences and giving presentations. Read an extract from this humorous novel and make a list of presentation nightmares described in it:**

Conferences are part of the job for a scientist, but why do we do it? We go to listen, we go to be seen, we go to meet, we go to discuss our data. The usual conference dinners, discos or other boozy events are as important as the formal sessions. A large group of normally reticent scientists at the conference disco is an awesome sight, especially when they have had a few drinks.

I get bored quite quickly in the formal presentations, so a speaker must grab me immediately to keep my attention. When my mind wanders, I think of the nightmare speakers I have encountered. One of the most memorable presentations came from Dr “I put the talk together on the plane”. He had probably flown in on the morning of the symposium and, although the audience knew they were in London, the presenter seemed to have no idea what time zone he was in. He bumbled through his presentation, no one got much from it and it was all rather embarrassing. And as this was all taking place at the Royal Institution, you could hear Michael Faraday’s ghost screaming. Apparently, the jet-lagged speaker is now an endangered species. Globe-trotting professors are now turning to a drug called modafinil to combat jet lag and they claim it helps them give better presentations.

Next up steps Prof “Macs are better than PCs”. I am a PC person and have never understood the lure of the Mac, but for many they seem something close to a religious experience. Now I don’t mind them practising this religion in private amongst consenting adults, but it gets on your nerves at conferences. At a meeting I attended in Italy recently, there were several presentations in which a number of PowerPoint slides were mystifyingly blank. The speakers appeared to be mystified too and understandably, the audience found these presentations difficult to follow. The problem arose because the presenter used a Mac and the conference was all PC-based. Haven’t the Mac brigade worked this one out yet?

Prof “Defeated by technology” provides good entertainment. The principal character in Zadie Smith’s *On Beauty* forgets his notes for an important lecture where he is using PowerPoint for the first time and is humiliated as a result. I remember well giving a talk at the Hammersmith Hospital in the early days of PowerPoint when, after loading the talk onto their computer, a message came up on the screen saying *your talk is being modified by the MRC system*. All my demure bullet point diamonds were changed to cheeky TV screens, thereby sweeping aside any gravitas I might have had. My favourite technology nightmare, however, comes from pre-PowerPoint days, back when slides were being used in a carousel projector. One presenter could not get the carousel to work and she was told to turn the carousel over and look underneath. She did this but forgot there was no lid on the carousel. She spent the next ten minutes reassembling her talk from the random pile of slides on the floor while the audience shuffled nervously and some escaped to the bar.

Next we have Dr “My manhood is as big as my PowerPoint file”. This speaker has been told that they have thirty minutes to speak and that there is a strict conference timetable. Thirty minutes are up and the speaker has only got through fifty of his ninety-odd PowerPoint slides. He speeds up and we have to endure five minutes of unintelligible science based on a quick run-through of the remaining forty slides. It does not take much effort to check in advance how long your talk is likely to take, so my sympathy levels here are very low.

Finally we have Prof “I am so cool it hurts”. They usually give excellent presentations because their charisma carries them through; they tell good jokes and they are usually fun to watch. I remember one such speaker demonstrating a point about the structure of DNA by taking off the belt that held up his trousers. This was done in such a florid manner that there was something aggressively Freudian about the gesture, but fortunately his trousers did stay up. Another memory is of a major plenary speaker who, having been introduced, removed first his tie and then his jacket with expansive gestures and delivered the lecture sitting nonchalantly on the bench at the front. How cool can you get? But this is nothing compared to one of my

undergraduate lecturers who delivered his lectures lying prone on the front bench while smoking a pipe. I guess these people are frustrated actors, but they add colour to otherwise dull events.

So we scientists still keep going to conferences despite the presenters. Perhaps it's the chance to travel to exotic locations; perhaps it's the chance to see your friends. Or perhaps it's the chance to add another nightmare presentation to the list.

### *III. Discussion Activity "Dealing with Presentation Disasters"*

*Study the following situations that can occur during your presentation and think of the possible solutions to them:*

What do you do if...

1. You find you have 15 minutes instead of the 45 you planned on.
2. Someone asks a question about an issue you plan to discuss in detail later.
3. You lose your train of thought mid-sentence.
4. You plan to work through a handout page by page; people are moving ahead at their own pace.
5. You expect to speak to 30 people and arrive to find 200.
6. Your throat dries out.
7. Several people start a side conversation while you are speaking.

*Even if you aren't actually confident speaking in front of an audience, fake it. Never show weakness! Don't make excuses for a lack of preparation or knowledge.*

#### **TEXT 13**

#### **Q&A Pointers**

*Now that you have presented your work to your colleagues, it is time to receive their questions, and possibly their criticism. Open the floor to questions, and be ready to answer.*

#### ***I. Answer the following questions:***

*How will you deal with audience questions?*

*What if you can't answer the question?*

*How will you respond to criticism?*

*What if the audience misunderstands what you say?*



Questions are a good opportunity for you to interact with your audience. It may be helpful for you to try to predict what questions will be asked so that you can prepare your response in advance. You may wish to accept questions at any time during your presentation, or to keep a time for questions after your presentation. Normally, it's your decision, and you should make it clear during the introduction. Be polite with all questioners, even if they ask difficult questions. They are showing interest in what you have to say and they deserve attention.

Sometimes you can reformulate a question. Or answer the question with another question. Or even ask for comment from the rest of the audience.

You are the expert; but you may get asked a very hard question, one you don't know the answer to, or on something you hadn't thought about.

- Don't get flustered. You do not have to give an answer; this is not an exam.
- Do not get defensive.
- Think about the question. Don't answer immediately. If nothing good comes, say, "Really good question, I hadn't thought about that aspect. Let's talk about it later..."

If you didn't understand the question, you can be sure a lot of others didn't either: Rephrase the question aloud. "Let me rephrase your question to make sure I understand you clearly: <Repeat question>. Is that it?"

Always be gracious: Never ridicule the questioner, no matter how brain-dead the question. This will turn the audience against you. It's not enough that you made it through your talk. Now you must subject yourself to cross-examination and do so while thinking on your feet. Q & A sessions can definitely be tricky, but remember, while you are at the podium you are in charge.

Never answer questions in a dismissive or confrontational manner. Answer knowledgeably. Remember that "I do not know" is a good answer. If you don't have the answer, say so. Then amplify: "Those data won't be available for several months," or "Sorry, that's outside my area of expertise." Then offer a helpful solution: "I'll find out and get back to you" or "That's Joe Smith's field. See me later and I'll tell you how to contact him."

If you run out of time, apologize for being unable to take every question. Offer to make yourself available after your presentation. Give a short statement to close your Q & A session, then thank your audience for their questions and interest.

***II. Imagine it is the end of your presentation and you are asking if there are any questions. What phrases might you use or hear?***

***III. Think of some phrases that might be appropriate to use when you want to avoid answering questions***

#### **TEXT 14**

##### **Guide to How to Give a "Bad" Presentation**

(Based on a humorous piece by Richard Smith, editor of the *British Medical Journal*, 2000)

***I. Study the following guide to how to give a "bad" presentation and think of some other tips of your own to add to the guide.***

- Forgetting altogether that you agreed to speak is a good way to make a mess of your presentation. A variant is to arrive late. Don't arrive too late because they will simply have cancelled your session, probably sending a thrill of pleasure through an audience facing the prospect of five consecutive speakers.
- One way to prepare for a bad presentation is not to prepare at all. Step up to the platform, open your mouth, and see what comes out. This is, however, a high-risk strategy because spontaneity may inspire both your audience and you. Inspiration must be avoided at all costs.
- A really bad presentation needs careful preparation. A good piece of advice is to prepare for the wrong audience. It is much the best strategy to give an overcomplicated presentation than an oversimplified one.
- Be sure to prepare a presentation that is the wrong length. Too long is much the best. Most of the audience will be delighted if your talk is too short. But something that is too long always depresses an audience, even if what you are saying is full of wit and wisdom.
- Another trick is to ignore the topic you are given, and speak on a completely different subject.

- You may be able to enhance your bad presentation by sending the organizers in advance a long and dull curriculum vitae to read before your presentation.
- Bad slides are the traditional aid of a bad presentation. They must be far too many, contain too much information and be too small for even those in the front row to read. Flash them up as fast as you can, ensuring that they are in the wrong order with some slides upside down. Ideally there should be little connection between what you are saying and what is on the slide.
- The essence of a bad presentation is to be boring. Anything that isn't boring will detract from your bad presentation.
- Never look at the audience. Mumble your presentation, and preferably read it. A presentation that is read will usually be satisfyingly bad, but for the full effect you should have long complicated sentences with dozens of sub-clauses.
- A truly bad presentation rarely produces any questions. Most people will just want to get away. If you do get questions, you may have failed in giving a bad presentation. But all is not lost. By sticking to the basic rules of being boring and overcomplicated, and by speaking too long, you may still be able to rescue your bad presentation. The extra rule on answering questions is that under no circumstances should you really answer them. Once you have finished say, "Does that answer your question?" If the questioner has the effrontery to say no, then do it again, only at greater length.



*Presentation on the topic: Insomnia: is there a cure?*

## **Appendix 1**

Suggested Criteria for an Excellent Oral Presentation

### **I. Content**

Extent of coverage

Difficulty level of coverage

Clarity of coverage

Interesting



## **II. Organization**

### ***Overall***

Coherent, good coordination, easy to follow

Concise

Clear

Appropriate

### ***Introduction***

Gained the audience's interest and immediate attention

Stated purpose clearly

Identified the topic and defined the scope of the presentation

### ***Body***

The main points were supported with details

Documented facts where necessary

Transitions were made between the main points to enable the listener to follow the development of the presentation

Sounded believable

Sounded persuasive

Informative: something was learnt

### ***Conclusion***

Signalled the ending

Summarised main points

Closed smoothly

***Answered questions thoroughly and accurately***

## **III. Delivery – 10 points**

Appearance

Eye contact

Facial expression

Hand control

Body movements

Gesturing

Voice: Loudness & softness (in general & for special effects)

Speed & pacing (in general & appropriacy of pauses)

Humor, enthusiasm and interest

Confidence of presenter

Timing

## **IV. Language**

Complexity

Grammar

Pronunciation

Stress & intonation

Vocabulary

Fluency

## **V. Visual aids**

Suitable number

Varied

Design: clear and well-made

Relevance: used appropriate visual aids

Used visual aids effectively

## **Appendix 2**

**Active Vocabulary on the Topic “Scientific Conference”**

to hold a conference	проводить конференцию
a plenary meeting	пленарное заседание
the opening ceremony	церемонии открытия
a chairman/ chairperson	председатель
to chair the session	председательствовать на заседании секции, вести заседание
to give the floor to smb	давать слово кому-либо
to take the floor	брать слово, выступить
to set the time limit	установить ограничение по времени
to break the time limit	нарушить ограничение по времени
to stimulate discussions	побуждать дискуссии
to ask smb a question	задать вопрос кому-либо
to discuss in detail	обсуждать подробно
to begin /finish with	начать с/ кончить
to emphasize/ point out	подчёркивать/обращать внимание на
to give an explanation of	give an explanation of
to draw a conclusion	делать вывод
to call for questions	призывать задавать вопросы
a speaker/ a contributing participant	докладчик
to submit abstracts	представить аннотации
to present a paper	представить доклад
to take part/participate in a conference	участвовать в конференции
to attend a conference	принимать участие в конференции
to keep to the point	придерживаться темы
to digress from the subject	отклониться от темы
to have a good/poor command of English	хорошо/плохо владеть английским языком
to consider a range of questions	рассматривать ряд вопросов
to cancel smth	отменять что-либо
an agenda	повестка дня, программа
a working group session	заседание секции
to introduce a speaker	представить докладчика
to comment on the paper	сделать комментарии/ замечания к докладу
to do research/ study/ investigate/explore	исследовать, изучать что-либо
to remind of	напоминать
poster presentation	стендовая презентация
oral presentation	устное представление доклада, презентация
to make/give a presentation on	проводить презентацию по теме...
to contribute/to make a contribution to	вносить вклад в
to put forward an idea/hypothesis	выдвинуть идею/ гипотезу
field of science/research	область науки/ исследования
to deal with/to consider the problem of	рассматривать проблему
to take up the problem	заниматься проблемой
to work on the problem	работать над проблемой
to make conclusions	делать выводы
to present research findings	представлять результаты исследования
handouts	раздаточные материалы
visual aids	визуальные средства
screen	экран
pointer	указка
slide	слайд

audience	аудитория
to succeed in	достигать цели, преуспевать в
to perform/carry out numerous experiments	проводить многочисленные эксперименты

### Appendix 3 Useful Phrases

Section of presentation	Possible language
<b>Welcoming the audience</b>	Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming along here today. Dear Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I'm greatly honoured to be invited to this conference. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to.... Good morning, colleagues Good afternoon, everybody
<b>Introducing the subject</b>	The subject/topic of my talk is ... I'm going to talk about ... My topic today is... My talk is concerned with ... The purpose of today's presentation is to discuss how we can... In this paper I would like to talk about .... The subject that I will discuss is...
<b>Outlining the structure of presentation</b>	I'm going to divide this talk into four parts. There are a number of points I'd like to make. Basically/ Briefly, I have three things to say. I'd like to begin/start by ... Let's begin/start by ... First of all, I'll... To start with I'll describe ... ... and then I'll go on to ... Then I'll mention some of the problems we've encountered and how we overcame them. Then/ Next ... After that I'll consider the possibilities for Finally/ Lastly ... Finally, I'll summarize my presentation
<b>Giving instructions about questions</b>	Do feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions. I'll try to answer all of your questions after the presentation. I plan to keep some time for questions after the presentation. At the end I'd be very happy to answer any of your questions
<b>Introducing the subject</b>	I'd like to start by... Let's begin by... First of all, I'll... Starting with... I'll begin by...
<b>Finishing one subject...</b>	That's all I have to say about... We've looked at... So much for... Well, I've told you about...
<b>...and starting another</b>	Moving on now to ... Turning to... Let me now turn to....

	<p>Let us consider what happens if...</p> <p>The next issue/topic/area I'd like to focus on ...</p> <p>I'd like to expand/elaborate on ...</p> <p>Now we'll move on to...</p> <p>I'd like now to discuss...</p> <p>Let's look now at...</p> <p>Turning to...</p>
<b>Analysing a point and giving recommendations</b>	<p>Where does that lead us?</p> <p>Let's consider this in more detail...</p> <p>What does this mean for...?</p> <p>Translated into real terms...</p> <p>Let us have a closer look at...</p> <p>Let us suppose that...</p> <p>On the contrary...</p> <p>On the one hand...,on the other hand...</p> <p>This is indeed the case when...</p> <p>This is particularly true for....</p> <p>Why is this important?</p> <p>The significance of this is...</p> <p>According to this theory...</p> <p>Again, I want to point out that...</p> <p>It should be emphasized that...</p>
<b>Paraphrasing and clarifying</b>	<p>Simply put...</p> <p>In other words....</p> <p>So what I'm saying is....</p> <p>To put it more simply....</p> <p>To put it another way....</p>
<b>Ordering</b>	<p>Firstly...secondly...thirdly...lastly...</p> <p>First of all...then...next...after that...finally...</p> <p>To start with...later...to finish up...</p>
<b>Giving examples</b>	<p>For example, ...</p> <p>A good example of this is...</p> <p>As an illustration ...</p> <p>Let me give you my explanation of ....</p> <p>To give you an example, ...</p> <p>To illustrate this point...</p>
<b>Summarising and concluding</b>	<p>To sum up ...</p> <p>To summarise...</p> <p>Right, let's sum up, shall we?</p> <p>Let's summarise briefly what we've looked at...</p> <p>If I can just sum up the main points...</p> <p>Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've covered...</p> <p>To conclude...</p> <p>In conclusion ...</p> <p>In short ...</p> <p>So, to remind you of what I've covered in this talk, ...</p> <p>Unfortunately, I seem to have run out of time, so I'll conclude very briefly by saying that .....</p> <p>I'd like now to recap...</p> <p>Since I am running out of time...</p> <p>As my time is running out....</p> <p>Before I close I would like to emphasize the importance of....</p> <p>Finally I want to say a few words about....</p>

	<p>I end this paper with a description of ...</p> <p>In closing I want to mention very briefly...</p> <p>In conclusion, let me say...</p> <p>Summing up, I would like to...</p> <p>The last part of my talk will be devoted to...</p>
<b>Giving recommendations</b>	<p>In conclusion, my recommendations are...</p> <p>I therefore suggest/propose/recommend the following strategy.</p>
<b>Thanking the audience</b>	<p>Many thanks for your attention.</p> <p>May I thank you all for being such an attentive audience.</p>
<b>Invitation to discuss / ask questions</b>	<p>I'm happy to answer any queries/ questions.</p> <p>Does anyone have any questions or comments?</p> <p>Please feel free to ask questions.</p> <p>If you would like me to elaborate on any point, please ask.</p> <p>Would you like to ask any questions?</p> <p>Any questions?</p> <p>Now I'll try to answer any questions you may have.</p> <p>Can I answer any questions?</p> <p>Are there any questions?</p> <p>Do you have any questions?</p> <p>Are there any final questions?</p>

#### Appendix 4

##### Useful Vocabulary for Presenting Figures and Trends:

- As you will see from this graph...
- I'd like to show you ...
- Let me draw your attention to this part of the graph
- Let's look more closely at this month's figures
- This figure refers to ..... only.
- The pie chart shows ... .
- The bar chart represents ... .
- Here you can see a comparison between ...
- On the line graph you will note:
  - a strong upward trend in ...
  - despite occasional fluctuations...

##### Commenting trends

- **Increases :**
  - a slight/constant/marked/substantial increase in ...
  - an increase of about/roughly/approximately/in the region of ...%
  - a little over/above what we predicted
  - an overall increase in...
  - by (month) the figure had risen to ...
- **Decreases :**
  - just under our target
  - way below our expectations
  - a slight/notable/significant decrease in
  - a drop of about ...% in ...
  - a slight/regular/dramatic decline/reduction in ...
  - the situation began to deteriorate in (month)
  - the number has continued to fall

##### Fluctuations/Variations :

- a slow start developed into steady progress in ....
- we note slight fluctuations throughout the year
- the level/the rate has been unstable since