

7th Biennial Bay-Delta Science Conference

Ecosystem Reconciliation: Realities Facing the San Francisco Estuary

October 16–18, 2012 Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento, California



Power Point Presentation Tips

Slide Composition

- Dark colored background with light colored text projects much better than light backgrounds with dark text.
- Make sure you can read your slides when projected from 70 feet in a partially darkened room.
- Limit each slide to one main idea.
- Use several simple slides rather than one complicated one.
- Use duplicate slides if you need to refer to the same slide at several points during your talk.
- Plan your slides for good visual pace.

Basic organization

1. **Title slide** - Title of talk (2 lines max), presenter's name, organizational credits, date and location of presentation
2. **Body slides** - Depends on content (text, images, graphs). Use same type-face & color scheme.
3. **Summary slide** - Use 1 or 2 slides to sum up your central message.
4. **Finish slides** - Use 1 or 2 slides can be a "thank you for you attention" or "staff acknowledgements" or a pretty sunset. Creates closure, professionalism.

How many slides do I show?

- Rule of thumb: # of minutes – 10%, then round down.
- 15 min – (10%) = 15 – 1.5 = 13.5 slides
- Give more time for data, less for text. Between 1 – 2 min. per slide.

Text slides are good for:

- Making bullet statements of central message or summary points
- Stating hypotheses or test predictions
- Outlining highlights or research protocol
- Summarizing methods of data collection
- Citing seminal works or quotes

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Text tips

- Use bullet statements or an outline
- Use 5 lines with 5 words per line
- Choose light text on a dark background
- Avoid red type
- Choose an easy-to-read font: Times, Arial, Courier
- Use a font as large as slide will allow
- Avoid all caps—it's harder to read
- Use 1.5 line spacing
- Check ALL spelling!

Tables

- Good for showing specific data values
- Don't show a table of tiny words and numbers
- Condense the data to what is relevant
- Use no more than 4 columns and 3 lines
- Simplify column headings

Photos

- Can be used to make your point
- Good for Methods section
- Break up the monotony of text and graphics
- Good for showing research assistants
- Use as “eye candy” for finish slides
- Use only high-quality photos with good color and contrast
- Lighter photos are more successful than darker ones

Graphs

- Effective graphs will clarify your findings at a glance.
- Poor graphs will leave your audience confused.
- Limit the amount of information in each graph.
- Decide what type of graph is best for the type of data presented.
- Avoid using true reds in your presentation, as color blind individuals cannot distinguish red from black. Instead use light reds or vermillion (yellowish red).
- Use redundant coding in your figures, using color, shape AND texture to distinguish data.

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- Avoid using separate keys. Identify data with labels positioned within the plot, linked to data with thin lines.
- Types of Graphs
 - **Flow charts** - Summarize how several variables interact, good for methods section
 - **Schematic diagrams** - Good for showing piece equipment
 - **Bar graphs** –
 - compare 2 or 3 subjects for 2 or 3 variables
 - “stacked” bar-graph good for expressing proportions of a whole
 - **Line graphs** - display change over time, 3 lines (data series) is the limit for one graph
 - **Pie charts**
 - present proportions of the whole
 - two together allow comparison (like stacked bar graphs)
 - better for more than 2 series than stacked bar graphs
 - present no more than 2 per slide
- Color with graphs
 - Use bold, vivid, clear colors (avoid dark red and muted colors)
 - Use colors consistently
 - Light text on a dark background is better than dark on light
 - Ensure color is used in combination with shaped markers and line textures to clearly identify data series for all viewers.

Techniques for giving your talk

Prepare in general

- What is my topic?
- What day am I speaking?
- What time am I speaking?
- Where and in what room am I speaking?
- Who is my Session chair?
- How and when will I load my presentation onto the conference computer?
- What are the size and layout of the presentation room?
 - Rooms 306, 307 & 314 are approximately 45 feet wide by 67 feet long, seating approximately 280 people theater style at the 2012 Bay-Delta Science Conference.

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- Rooms 308-310, and 311-313 are 70 feet wide by 67 feet long, seating approximately 375 people theater style at the 2012 Bay-Delta Science Conference.
- How long will I have to talk?
 - You will have 15 minutes to talk at the 2012 Bay-Delta Science Conference
- How much time for questions?
 - You will have 3 minutes for questions at the 2012 Bay-Delta Science Conference
- Will there be other talks on similar or related subjects?
- At what point in the program will your talk be given?

Define your central message

- The best presentations make just one point, loudly and clearly.
- Do your best to develop a summary of your work that you can state in 25 words or less, using plain English.

To organize your talk:

- Use introduction, methods, results, discussion/conclusions/significance segments
- Consider the central message in every segment
- Indicate why anyone should care about your findings
- Use simple, direct, active words.
- Your primary purpose for giving the scientific talk is to inform or instruct.
- Your topic is defined within the context of the rest of the program and within your invitation to speak.
- Your depth and scope of content is determined by the audience profile and the time given for you to speak.

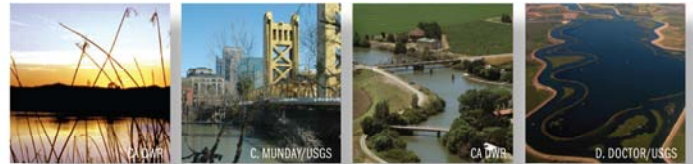
To clarify your talk:

- Keep the non-technical language as straightforward and uncomplicated as possible
- Simplify your phrases
- Tighten your sentences
- Never use a long word when a short one will do
- If you can delete a word without losing meaning, delete it.
- Use equations, math, and symbols sparingly and carefully

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- Scientific talks contain many facts and data, so **SUMMARIZE**. Summaries can be done as you progress or at the end. Visual summaries are particularly effective.

To generating excitement and interest, ask:

- Why would other scientists be interested?
- How can I generate excitement for my subject in someone without knowledge and involvement?
- How might other disciplines or other research areas within my own discipline use this information?
- Is there a research or teaching anecdote I could include for emphasis, added interest or humor?

How to use your voice

- Speak slowly and clearly
- Modulate your voice: somewhere between monotone and sing-song
- Look up and make eye contact periodically
- Work hard to eliminate nervous sounds (uh, um)
- Emphasize certain words to get your meaning across

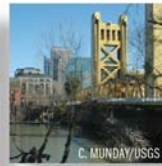
Style of delivery: to read or ad-lib?

- Some recommend reading along word for word with text slides
- Others prefer an outline format while you provide more complete verbal accompaniment.
- Do what feels natural to YOU.
- **If you read:**
 - Try to make it as natural as possible
 - Write the text in short, uncomplicated sentences.
 - Avoid jargon and fancy verbiage
 - Read verbatim, don't change the wording
 - Additionally,
 - You **MUST** walk your audience through the graphs in the Results section
 - Tell them the important point
 - Make it clear how this fits into your central message
- **If you prefer note-free (ad-libbing):**
 - This approach is often more engaging for the audience
 - Let the slides cue your speech

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- You must really know your material well
- You will almost have memorized your slide order
- Be careful about exceeding your time frame

Adhere to your time frame

- Don't make your session moderator take "police action" against you!
- To assure success in this area...practice, practice, practice.

Practice, practice, practice

- Rehearse with accessories (microphone, pointer, screen)
- Try it out on your peers, family, pets, in the mirror, videotape
- Practice early to accommodate revisions
- If it's too long – don't talk faster – cut something out.