

How to ride the research roller coaster:

Effective presentation skills.

Thaleia Dimitra Doudali

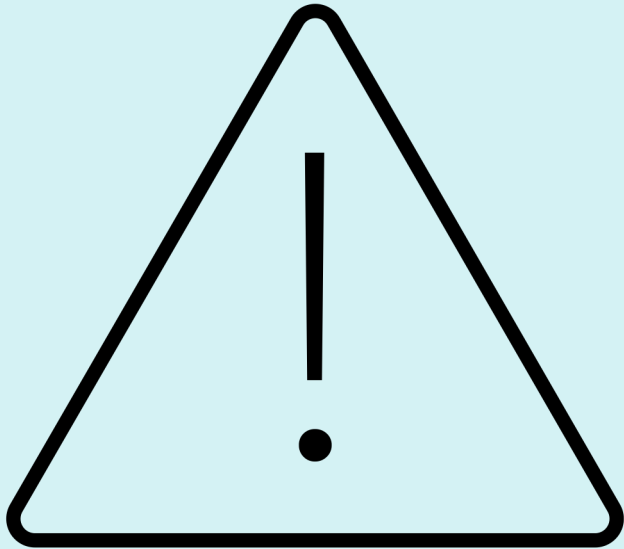
Assistant Professor at IMDEA Software Institute

26 May 2022

Agenda

- General Presentation Tips
- Practical Presentation Tips
- Microsoft Powerpoint Demo
- Poster Presentation
- Elevator Pitches

Seminar on Effective Presentation Skills



Disclaimer

The advice in this seminar comes
from personal experiences and
online references!

Presentation Skills are Essential

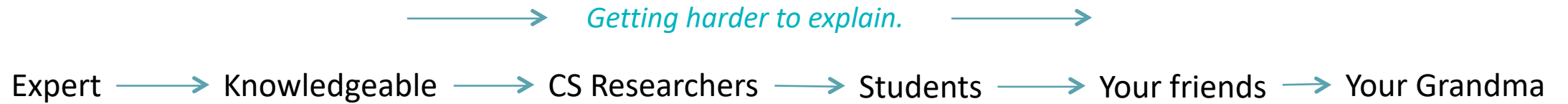
Presentation occasions:

- Thesis defense.
- Conferences and workshops.
- Seminars, invited talks, white board sessions.
- Poster sessions and competitions.
- Networking events.
- At the elevator or lunch table.
- Job interviews.



You spent so much time and effort in a project... Now spend time preparing how to best present it!

Know Your Audience



Things to adapt:

- Terminology.
- Assumptions.
- Background information.
- Motivation and importance of the problem.



Time is of Essence

How many slides to make? Follow the 2/3 breakdown.

- If you have 30 mins, make 20 slides.
- Each slide takes 1-2 minutes.
- Mark which slides could be skipped.
- Make backup slides.
- Make time for pauses and switching slides.
- Don't panic, if running out of time.
- Skip slides, do not talk faster.

Better to say less, than say things fast.



Structure of a Talk

How to structure the talk? Follow the 10-15-5 breakdown.

- **Introduction: 10 mins.**

- The problem space.
- Why is it important.
- What others have done.
- What you are proposing.

Most important part of the talk.

Keep it easy to follow and engaging!

The attention span of an audience lasts about **7 minutes!**



- **Technical Contributions: 15 mins.**

- Solution, insights, evaluation.

Technical part.

Audience may lose attention.



- **Conclusion: 5 mins.**

- Remaining challenges.
- Important takeaways.

Wake them up!

Tell them what to remember from this talk.

Practice, Practice, Practice



The rule of thumb:

the more you practice, the better you become.

The rule of the other thumb:

the more talks you *attend*, the more you will shape your presentation style.

- Practice with your advisor, peers, at group meetings.
- Record yourself and play it back.
- Get feedback on the content and flow of the slide deck.
- It gets better and easier with time.

Talking Tips

- Do **not read** notes or text on the slides.
- Keep **keywords** on the slides or the notes.
- Practice, but do **not memorize**.
- Memorize the first few minutes to get into the flow.
- Keep a steady voice and pace.
- Pause when switching slides.
- Work on your “eerr”.. “so”.. “mmm”..
- Talk with enthusiasm!



Where to look at?



- Face the audience.
- Don't look at your slides.
- Move your eyes across the audience.
- If too nervous, look at the void.

How to Answer Questions

- Be confident. **Noone** knows the work better than you.
- Think about potential questions and prepare **backup** slides.
- Have a colleague ask you a question to start the Q/A with confidence.
- Repeat the question in the way you understand it.
- If you are not sure how to answer, or don't know what to say:
 - *Let's take the discussion offline.*
 - *We didn't consider this angle, but thank you for pointing it out.*
 - *We didn't consider this angle, because the focus of this work was to..*
- **Never apologize!**



Agenda

- General Presentation Tips
- Practical Presentation Tips
- Microsoft Powerpoint Demo
- Poster Presentation
- Elevator Pitches

Practical Presentation Tips

Presentation Styles (1)

Every person has their own style preferences both as a presenter and as a member of the audience.

Example 1: only text.



Pros:

- Easier to make.
- Includes detailed information.



Cons:

- Harder for the audience to follow.
- Harder to spark interest.

How to make it work:

- Use bullets, different fonts, sizes and color to keywords and headings.
 - ...but don't overdo it! Be consistent!
- Use animations.
 - Show blocks of text as you speak.
- Balance it with use of images.
 - Graphics are easier to understand.

Presentation Styles (2)

Every person has their own style preferences both as a presenter and as a member of the audience.

Example 2: only graphics.



Pros:

- Easier to convey information.
- Sparks interest.



Cons:

- Hard to visualize everything.
- Important information may be missing.

How to make it work:

- Balance the use of graphics and text.
- Text contains only important information, summaries etc.
- If graphic does not show important information, make it smaller.



Tips on the Structure of a Slide

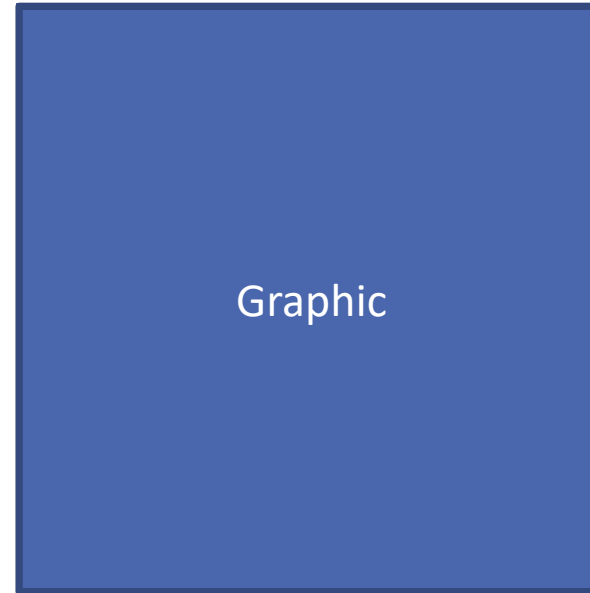
It is helpful for the audience to follow structured content.

- Text, text, text

- Text, text, text

- Text, text, text

- Text, text, text

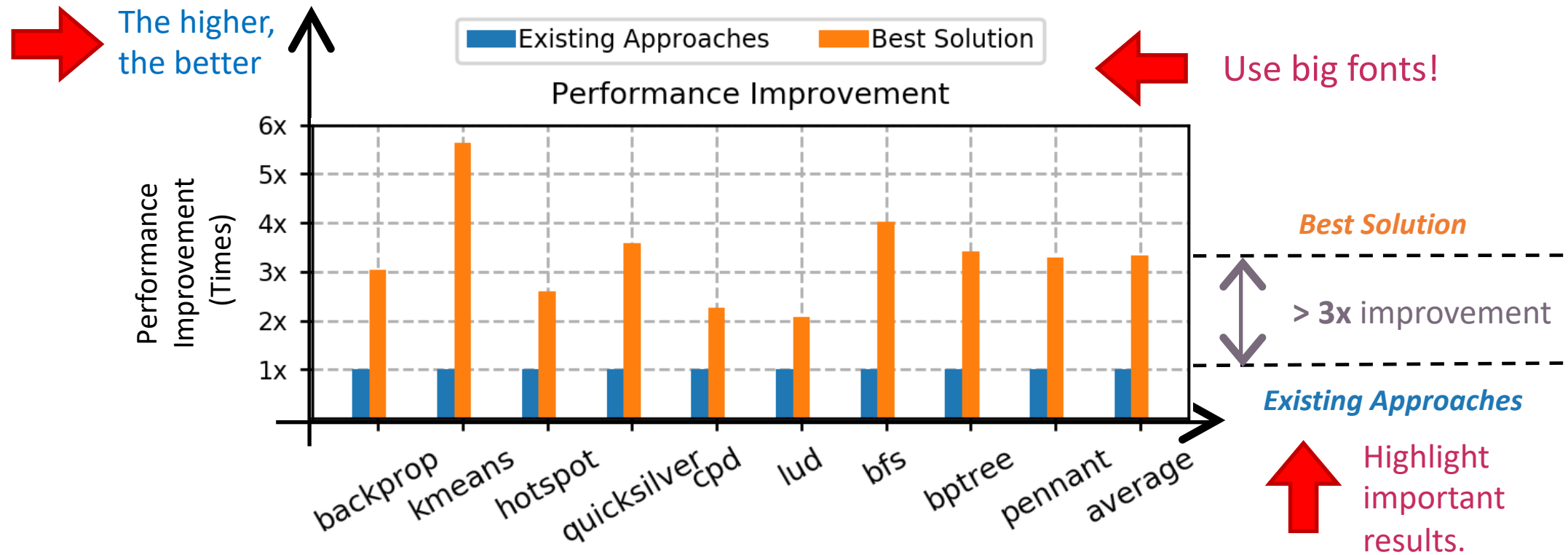


Graphic Caption

Takeaway: Summarize 1 thing the audience needs to take away from this slide.

Presenting Graphs of Experiments

Spend time to explain the axis, the metrics and the expected behavior.



You can show the axis first and explain what will come.

The Last Slide

The slide that remains open during the Q/A should summarize important parts of the talk.



Contributions



Scan my website

 **Contact:**

<email>

Takeaways

.. Any acknowledgements ..

.. Add other logos, graphics..

Agenda

- General Presentation Tips
- Practical Presentation Tips
- Microsoft Powerpoint Demo
- Poster Presentation
- Elevator Pitches

PPT Demo

Microsoft Powerpoint Demo

- Insert icons, images.
- Animations.
- Slide master.
- Add slide number.
- Group, save as an image.
- Record a video, timings, rehearse.
- Export to .pdf, .mp4, .gif

Agenda

- General Presentation Tips
- Practical Presentation Tips
- Microsoft Powerpoint Demo
- **Poster Presentation**
- Elevator Pitches

Posters

How to Structure a Poster



My I[M]DEA: Show your Work Day

The Poster Competition Committee



Title of the Project
Author(s) and Affiliation(s)

WHAT?

IMDEA Poster Competition

Come to **present your work**, **socialize**, and **celebrate** the beginning of the summer!

There is no free lunch in privacy, but we will have it.

CHALLENGE:

Can you create an X poster understood by Y people?
X, Y := crypto, PL, security, ...

WHEN?

Prep Workshop: **26 May**
Poster Registration: **1 June**
Poster Submission: **16 June**
Event: **30 June**

WHY?

Show your Work!
Learn other's Work!

Win IOUs [1]:

	300 IOU
	200 IOU
	100 IOU

And surprises for everyone!



Blocks of Content

For example:

- Problem Space.
- Motivation.
- Solution.
- Evaluation.
- Future Work.

Tips

- Less text (10x less, really).
- Big graphs and fonts.
- Highlight important parts.
- Main idea should be clear.
- No one will read a full poster.

HOW?

1. [Register](#) for the **Prep Workshop**.
2. Register your **Poster**.
3. Make an **A0 size poster** (similar, but don't copy this).
4. **Submit** your poster.
5. **Present** it.
6. Have fun, **free lunch** and **win fun prizes**!

MORE INFO

Read our [call for posters](#) to learn how to **trick our jury** and win the most IOUs.

Join My I[M]DEA @**Mattermost**.

Notes [1] IOU (IMDEA Owes You) is an imaginary currency -worth for the same amount in Euros- that you can use to buy non-imaginary, IMDEA SW allowed things, e.g., headphones, chair, travel to conference, through IMDEA Software.



References, acknowledgements, QR codes..



How to Present a Poster

Lightning talk:

- 1 minute version.
- Why visit my poster?

In front of the Poster:

- 5 minute version.
- Point to the poster.
- Point to keywords.
- Point to graphs.

Flow of Poster Presentation

1. **What problem** are you trying to address?
2. **Why** is it an important problem?
3. What do you do about it (**main contribution**, insight).
4. What do you achieve (**results**).

Read this resource: “Creating an Effective Poster” by John Wilkes. <http://goo.gl/HUVffd>

Agenda

- General Presentation Tips
- Practical Presentation Tips
- Microsoft Powerpoint Demo
- Poster Presentation
- Elevator Pitches

Elevator Pitches

Practicing Elevator Pitches

The answer to “So, what are you working on?”

Example Flow of the Pitch

- **Introduce** yourself.
- What is your **research area**?
- What **problem** you are working on?
- What is the **main idea** of your solution?
- How is your solution **useful**?

- 60 seconds.
- Is the other person an expert?
- Show excitement!
- Use a timer.

Group Activity

What is your research area?

- Cryptography.
- Programming Languages.
- Formal Methods.
- Security.
- Software Engineering.
- Machine Learning.

Split in 6 mixed groups.

- Pitch 1 at a time.
- Pay attention to the speaker!

Rotate.

- Repeat pitch 1 at a time.

Come back all together.

- Go around the room 1 at a time.
- What do you remember about their pitch?