

Presentation Checklist Version 2.03

Plan: consider your audience and your goals

(before you begin making slides)

- Know your presentation objective.
 - What is the purpose of this presentation? To inform, convince, justify, or bring about a decision?
 - Why is this presentation important to you?
 - What actions or decisions do you expect afterwards?
- Know your audience.
 - Who are the decision makers, influencers, and stakeholders and what is their background and motivation?
 - Why does your presentation matter to them?
 - Do you expect any pre-conceived biases or opinions?

Outline: improve organization and save time

(before you begin making slides)

Create an outline starting with the situation, complication, question, and answer. Discuss with a colleague

- Situation and Complication:** Statements of known facts from the audience's perspective; this defines common ground. The Situation should raise a Complication that presents an opportunity or a cause for concern
- Question:** The natural question that arises in the audience's mind given the Situation/Complication.
- Answer:** The answer to the question, forming the key message you want your audience to take away.
- Supporting arguments:** This represents the bulk of the presentation, where you make your case.
 - Generally, it's good to come up with 3 supporting points and keep them concise and organized.
 - For scientific presentations, this can be a logical, evidence-based argument (e.g. Data, Methods, Results).
 - Try to use Mutually Exclusive and Collectively Exhaustive (MECE) organization principles.
 - Include only arguments that are critical to your case.
 - Address any assumptions, opinions, or implicit/explicit biases.
- Risks and next steps:** What actions or decisions should happen next?

Create the presentation:

- Start with an Overview slide with the Situation, Complication, Question and Answer (see above).
- In the title of each slide, put the slide's key message. Avoid titles with no message (e.g. Data, Model, Results).
- Keep it simple. Ensure each slide conveys your key message as clearly and simply as possible.
- Graphics and font.
 - Follow [good graphics principles](#).
 - Ensure all font is at least 14 point. This includes all font in the figures (e.g. x and y axis).
 - Use dark text on light backgrounds. It is easier to read than white text with dark background.

Rehearse and present:

- Practice and improve your presentation skills.
 - Share your presentation with a colleague for feedback
 - Rehearse you presentation out loud (if possible with a colleague).
 - After presentation, ask for feedback, to help you to improve in the future
- Display a professional demeanor.
 - Know what slides comes next and don't read directly from the slide.
 - Be audible throughout room.
 - No wild gestures.
- Respect your audience.
 - Start and stop on time.
 - Explain all charts, pausing to let audience absorb material.
 - Adapt language to your audience's background.
 - Stop for clarifying questions but don't digress to topics that you'll address later.
 - Leave the audience feeling something meaningful was accomplished.

