

How to Give a (Seminar) Presentation?

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Outline

1 Let's Go!

2 Structure

3 A Few Tips

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2 Structure

3 A Few Tips

Who is listening?



Audience

- Who is listening?
- How many?
- What do they know already?
- What should they learn?

Your **ideal** audience...

- Read all the papers you also read to prepare for your talk.
- Is very alert and engaged with your topic.
- Is eager to listen to you for the next 30 minutes.

Your **probable** audience...

- Has never heard about the topic you are talking about.
- Is very willing to check their smartphones if they get bored.

Your goal

What **is** your goal

- Engage your audience with your topic.
- Make them curious and interested.

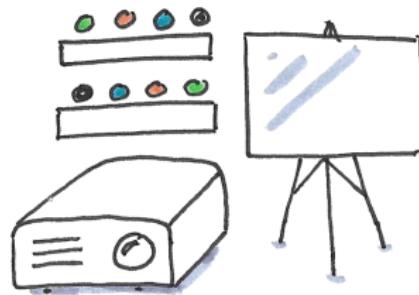
Your goal

What **is not** your goal

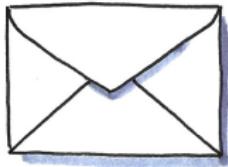
- Tell everything you know about the topic.
- Go very deep and technical into every detail.

Setup

- Time and length
- Size of the room
- Technical equipment
- Other presentations
- ...



Define a Main Message



- 30 minutes are not that long.
- Focus on **a single** topic.
- But motivate and explain it well.

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Possible Structure

- Title page
- Introduction
- Outline
- Activating previous knowledge
- New information
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Ending and questions

Title page

Content

- Title
- Name
- Date/event

Presentation

- Welcome the audience
- Mention title and topic

Introduction

Get the audience's attention

- Motivating example
- (Positive) provocation
- Interaction with the audience
-

Outline

- Structure of the presentation for the audience
- Repeating slides with current part highlighted
- Not always necessary

Outline is not a “compact version” of the presentation!

Activating Previous Knowledge

- Get the audience interested in the topic
- Refresh knowledge they (probably) have
- Connections to previous presentations

New Information

Main part of the presentation

Discussion

- Experimental evaluation
- Related work

Conclusion

- Take-home message
- Outlook (open questions, further reading)

Ending and Questions

- Does not have to be a separate slide.
- If there will be applause (e.g. seminars, thesis presentation), end by thanking the audience
 - not by asking for questions

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Example: Turing Machines in the textbook

Definition (Non-deterministic Turing machine)

A non-deterministic Turing machine is given by a 7-tuple $M = \langle Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, \square, E \rangle$. Here Q is a finite, non-empty set of states, $\Sigma \neq \emptyset$ is the finite *input alphabet*, $\Gamma \supset \Sigma$ the finite *tape alphabet* and $\delta : (Q \setminus E) \times \Gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R, N\})$ the *transition function*. State $q_0 \in Q$ is the *initial state*, Tape symbol $\square \in \Gamma \setminus \Sigma$ the *blank symbol* and $E \subseteq Q$ the set of *terminal states*.

Example: Turing Machines in a lecture

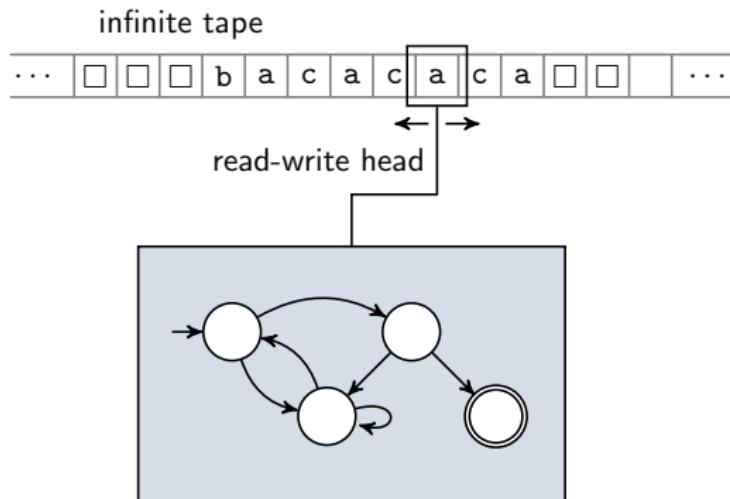
Definition (Non-deterministic Turing Machine)

A non-deterministic **Turing machine** is given by a 7-tuple

$M = \langle Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, \square, E \rangle$ with:

- $Q \neq \emptyset$ finite set of **states**
- $\Sigma \neq \emptyset$ finite **input alphabet**
- $\Gamma \supset \Sigma$ finite **tape alphabet**
- $\delta : (Q \setminus E) \times \Gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R, N\})$ **transition function**
- $q_0 \in Q$ **initial state**
- $\square \in \Gamma \setminus \Sigma$ **blank symbol**
- $E \subseteq Q$ **terminal states**

Example: Turing Machines in a seminar



Images and Illustrations

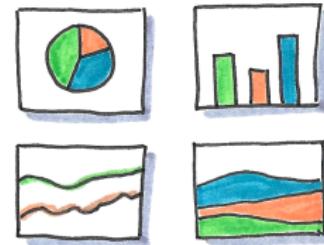
“A picture is worth a thousand words.”

- Supporting the text
- Additional information
- Replacing the text
- Lightening up the presentation



Slide Content

- One message per slide
- Bullet point instead of sentences
- Examples, images, illustrations
- Experimental data: graphs better than tables
- Formal definitions only if necessary



Style

- Standard font size or larger
- Color for **highlighting**
- consistent CAPITALIZATION
- “Less is more”
- Deliberate

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- “Less is more”
- Deliberate use of animations and overlay

Style

- Speak clearly
- Try not to read from your slides
- Be aware of the time limit



More Information

Great talk by Simon Peyton Jones

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/academic-program/give-great-research-talk/>

How to give a bad talk, by David Patterson

<https://people.eecs.berkeley.edu/~pattrsn/talks/BadTalk.pdf>