

Short Communication

HOW TO PRESENT THE RESEARCH FINDINGS IN 7 TO 8 MINUTES?

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Since last many years, during NATCON of ASI, I have observed that many of us are not able to present our research findings effectively and well within allotted time of 7 to 8 minutes. This is because we try to present it under various headings as it is presented in a published research paper (i.e., Introduction, Aims and objects, Review of literature, Materials and methods, Observations, Discussion, Summary, Acknowledgments and References). Clearly, it is not possible to present this much information in 8 minutes. We present many unnecessary details under the headings of review of literature, observations and discussion. So much information / data is included in a single slide, which nobody can read and understand in short duration.

How many projection slides should be included in a presentation?

Not more than 10 to 15 projection slides should be included in a presentation. If there are 15 slides, on an average each slide should be projected on screen for not more than half a minute. Some slides may remain projected for 10 seconds while others up to one minute.

What care should be taken to prepare a projection slide?

Slide should contain bulleted/numbered list of short incomplete sentences (points). In a slide there should not be more than 6 to 7 bulleted/numbered points. Tables should contain minimum and significant /important data. In my opinion, Comic Sans MS is the most preferred font because one can read it easily and quickly.

What should be included in a presentation?

Though there are no said rules as to what should be presented and what shouldn't be. However, our aim should be that, our research findings are conveyed to audience effectively. Audience are interested in knowing - what you have found from your research? What is new that you wish to add to their existing knowledge? Thus our main focus of presentation should be, our observations. Following is a brief guideline to prepare a presentation:

- **Title** - the first slide should project the title of research work, names of author(s) and name of institution.
- **Introduction**- second slide (and if necessary third also) should be of introduction. In these slides you should briefly introduce audience with your research. Introduce them as to what has been done on the subject in recent past. What is the status of the existing knowledge today? What are lacunae of other studies? Why you become interested in this subject?

Aims Mention your aims what you exactly want to find /investigate from your research? Use only one slide for projection of aims.

Material and Methods- Describe briefly the material used for study and care taken to select the material. Explain clearly the methods, used to investigate the project with the help of diagrams / photographs. Remember that methods used in research are very important and audience have many queries on methodology. Hence methods should be presented meticulously. Mention about the statistical test(s) used for study.

Use two slides for material and methods.

Observations This is the most important part of presentation. Present your observations with the help of tables/ bar diagrams, photographs etc. Present only the important findings (tables should not contain many data) and explain them properly when the slide is being projected on the screen. If you are comparing two observations (e.g., control and experimental groups / normal and abnormal) their photographs or findings should be projected side by side. Clearly indicate if your observations are statistically significant or not. If your observation is differing significantly from others, mention it briefly. One should use 4 to 6 slides for presenting observations.

Conclusions - present conclusion of your findings in the form of bulleted / numbered points. Highlight your main findings. Has your study added something new

to our existing knowledge? Or it failed to do so? If your findings are different from others, what may be the possible reasons for that?

One slide should be used to present conclusion.

What should not be included in a presentation?

Acknowledgment - Project the slide of acknowledgment, only if you still have some time left. It is better not to present the slide of acknowledgment, if it is not necessary. You can acknowledge the funding/sponsoring agency in a sentence, if any. Acknowledge the name(s) of your Dean/HOD/ Professor etc only if they have really helped you in your research. Strictly avoid sycophancy (chamchagiri) in the scientific presentation, which is a new trend started emerging since last few years.

Review of literature/ discussion / references should not be presented.

How to present (read) a paper?

While presenting a paper you should not read it word to word with the help of written notes. You should present your research paper by explaining and expanding the bulleted/ numbered points on the projected slide. Use very simple language. One should try to avoid using difficult language in any scientific presentation.

How to adjust the timing of presentation?

For this, you will have to practice your presentation again and again (at least 5 to 10 times). At first it may consume 15 or more minutes but with repeated practice time will reduce and you will be able to present it in 7 to 8 minutes. Repeated practice will also help you to adjust (increase or decrease) the number of slides. You can arrange a grand rehearsal of your presentation in front of the staff of your department and invite questions and suggestions.

How to reply to the questions of audience?

Listen to question carefully. Answer only when, the chairperson has asked you to do so. Be specific and brief in your reply. And if you do not know the answer of the question- admit it immediately. Never try to cook up an answer if you do not know it. Be polite enough in answering questions.