Scientific Presentations

- Posters
- Talks

Sylvia Cremer
IST Austria
23.05.2013

Scientific presentations

Conference / Workshop
- poster
- talk

Invited seminar talk
Job interview talk

many short contributions
in short time

longer talk & discussion
additional perspective

Stick to time restrictions
Dont overload – give clear take home message

Posters

When to present a poster instead of a talk?
• Ongoing project
• Small interesting story

How to make a good poster?
• Give only a single message!
• Present it in a picture story!
• 1 to 2 data figures!
• Display it in an easy to grasp way!

• Many posters at same time
• After a long day of talks

Poster sections

• Header: title, authors, affiliation, contact
• Main part: introduction / background
• material and methods
• results
• graphical
• conclusions
• References
• Acknowledgements
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster header</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large font size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short title: catchy but informative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Authors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>typically less on a poster than in the paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affiliation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give email address of presenting author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Logo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Photo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisable for large conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster Main Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background: 1 sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: 1 or 2 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Material &amp; Methods:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study system: short description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study design: graphic representation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poster Main Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Results:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focus on 2 major findings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show figures &amp; give stats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summarize findings below each figure in 1 sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conclusion:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 2 sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>come back to your research question,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>answer it clearly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• References:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give only the absolutely relevant references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(max 2-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. previous own work, method paper,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>similar study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Acknowledgements:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Funding Agencies: no funding numbers or details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logo of funding agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- important contributing persons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small printouts?
Posters – general rules

- Font size: smallest font: 1cm in print
- No clear structure requirements
  follow general setup of a paper, but be creative
- Use as few words as possible
  - reduce method details
  - number of data you present

You should be present at the poster session and can explain details!
Be there, don’t force people into conversation if they don’t give you a clear sign of interest

Posters – common mistakes

- Overload of text
  (don’t print a paper on an A0)
- Boring title
  - people scan through the titles to determine if they take another 30 sec to read on or not…
- No eyecatcher
- Too many eyecatchers
- Too turbulent background

Talks

- Conference talk: 10-20 min + 5 min
- Seminar Talk: 45 min + 15 min
- Job Interview talk: seminar talk with future directions

- Stick to scheduled time!

Talk Sections

- Introduction
- Question 1, Methods, Results, Discussion
- Question 2, Methods, Results, Discussion… mostly in Figures
- Summary & Conclusions
- (Outlook)
- Acknowledgements
Introduction
• adapt the introduction to your audience
• come to your question very soon
• explain immediately why this is of interest (not only at end)

• General question & impact
• Model system

• Don’t be too fast – this builds the basis for remainder of the talk

Main part:
• Logic subsections that should follow from each other; end each with a question that the next section will answer

• For each: basic methods, results, discussion
• Present figures, movies…

Summary & Conclusion
• Repeat most important results, interpret them

Outlook
• Give ideas for future research

Acknowledgements
• People
• Funding Sources

Additional information slides for discussion

• Label axes in an informative way in large enough font
• Give statistics: test applied, overall p value, posthoc significances

• Use colours – consistent & informative
• Replace text by figures wherever possible
• Don’t put too many figures on one slide

• Additional summary of major findings in words below each figure
### Talk Setup

- No historical representation of project
- Leave out unnecessary & distracting side paths
- Give very few points in a logical order
- Create one major take home message

- Not typical paper structure
  - all methods – all results – discussion of all…

### Talks – Style

- Use few words, rather graphs
- Use consistent colour coding throughout talk
- Don't overdo animations

- Font size not too small
- No weak colours

- Long talks:
  - outline slide in beginning
  - spelled out sections

### Talks – Presentation Style

- Speak loud and clear, and not too fast
- Don’t read off from your slides
- Look at the audience, not to the slides

- Give some highlights, don’t be too funny

- Use laserpointer only if providing information

- Don’t run over time!
- Train your talk beforehand!