Pointers on Talks and Research Papers

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Based on slides compiled by H. Hassanein and D. Rappaport.
Before your presentation

- Content of the talk:
  - Know what you are talking about
  - What do you want to convey and why
  - Length of your talk: 20–25 minutes.
    
    In any case, the length should be no more than 25 minutes.

- Plan your talk:
  - This is not simply a report/story/list of events
  - Think offline first, then edit
• Your talk should have a roadmap:
  – Motivation, objective, outline, some background, idea(s), analysis/results, conclusions
  – From a to b to c
**Pointers before presentation**

- Simplify
- Every slide should have a title and purpose
- One slide, one point — No overcrowding
- Use illustrations/pictures
- Use large and clear fonts (possibly colors)
- Practice, practice, practice . . .
- Acknowledge all sources. (These slides have been almost entirely copied from H. Hassanein and D. Rappaport.)
During your presentation

- Be well-prepared
- Be calm — chances are you know more on the subject than your audience
- Talk loudly, slowly and clearly
- Use an enthusiastic non-monotonic tone
- Face the audience
- End talk gracefully
- Questions
Don’t

• Allow anyone or anything to distract you
• Superficially “over do” it
• Cover up your lack of understanding by …
• Display and remove slides quickly/slowly
• Read from paper/slides all the time
Papers

- Planning — the paper should have a clear structure
- Finding references — where to look
- How to read/evaluate papers:
  - The so–and–so book says it, so it must be true
  - I got it from the so–and–so paper
  - It has been done this way in the literature . . .
  - Ask questions, read other papers and then come back, ask the authors (if they are available)
Content of the paper

- Title — meaningful, concise, catchy
- Abstract: brief, informative, reflects the work
- Introduction: something catchy, includes an overview and a flavor of results, avoid (too) technical terms
- Survey classification: say something about previous work, ok, here is my new twist
- Your work — idea, procedure, analysis
- Conclusion/summary
- Acknowledgments
- Reference list — no excuses
Pointers for papers

- In the paper *talk to someone*, that is, think of the reader as someone you can relate to.

- Ideally the reader is your peer. Someone currently in your lab, or a CS graduate student in some other area.

- The best papers will be read by students who will follow in your “research footsteps”.
Pointers for papers

- Describe the contents of your work and why they are interesting
- Goals then Results
- Have a focus
- Proofread your report – you annoy everybody otherwise
- Help each other in proofreading
- Update your survey
- Be on time — planning, responsibility, etc.