Pointers on Talks and Research Papers

CISC–897, Winter 2013

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.