Preparing an engaging conference presentation: a step-by-step guide

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Today

1. The 'secret'
2. The process
3. Your slides
4. 10 tiny details
1. Before you start

1. The ‘secret’

Answer these two questions

1. What do you have that the **audience** wants?

2. What is your talk going to **do**?

(know the difference between talks that are **about** something and talks that **do** something)

Activity (2-parter)

- Think of a talk you are doing soon or have done recently

  - What is it you have that your audience want?  
    (what do you ‘have’ that they need? could use?)  
    - Write it down.

  - Based on what you have – what is your talk going to **do**?  
    (should see verbs here)  
    - What will your talk **not** do?  
    - Write it down.
2. step-by-step process

Preparation

1. Make your ‘purpose’ the beginning and the end
2. Create sub-sections (on paper)
3. Write points for each slide (not content)
4. Open 1 slide per minute (to a max of 20 mins)
5. ‘flesh out’ PowerPoint last

Example

What I ‘have’ – a new way of training staff in IT
My purpose – to convince you that it’s easy and effective
Time – 15 minutes
Structure – a strong start

- think of an opening line that is:
  - not your name or seminar title
  - not a ‘thanks for coming’
  - makes your seminar stand out (in a good way)
  - engaging to the audience
  - related to your key message

3. ‘visuals’

Good practice

Readable + Relevant + Interesting + Supportive

Guidelines for your slides

- Font
  - Sans-serif font (e.g., Arial, Calibri) are easier to read
  - Avoid using more than 2 font sizes within each slide

- Colors
  - Choose 3-4 colors for your background and text. Use contrasting (e.g., bright on dark background)

- Layout
  - Keep text sizes to 24-32 points, depending on the font
  - Use bullet points to highlight key points
  - Avoid using too much text on a single slide

- Images
  - Use images that enhance your message
  - Avoid using too many images that distract from the main content
• Topic sentence – introduces the paragraph topic in the context of the overall argument or purpose of the essay: It is important to examine each element of the Wilkinson v Downton action in order to see how the tort has become unnecessary in the wake of the ever expanding tort of negligence.

• Examines key elements in the Wilkinson case in the light of Hoffmann’s contention that it has been made redundant by the principles of negligence: Firstly, there must be an act “wilfully done”… Wilful in this context suggests… voluntariness… an “essential feature of all torts”… i.e. indistinguishable from the requirements of negligence etc.

• Does not spend too much time or space describing or restating cases but rather highlights those elements that are relevant to the purpose of the essay: Downton did not intend to cause physical harm… “calculated” cannot therefore be limited to subjective intention… denotes an objective standard of conduct akin to… the tort of negligence

• Signposts the flow of his examination / argument by using linking or connective words and phrases: Firstly…, however…, arguably…, therefore…

• Use expert sources (primary and secondary) to support the points / arguments he is making: McPherson JA in Carrier v Bonham identifies the problem as being … (He uses both quotation and paraphrase)

• He draws together his examination / argument to a clear and focussed conclusion which supports the thesis statement:  … any wrongful act that satisfies the stricter test in Wilkinson v Downton will also satisfy the ordinary principles of negligence, therefore making the need for a separate tort non-existent.
### Training program

**'Multi-channel' options**
- Awareness raising in person
  - Demonstration of toolbox
  - Focus on content
  - Team training sessions
  - Individual follow-up
  - Stand alone resources (info sheets, instructions, video etc)

- X General 'information' sessions

### What questions do staff ask?

- Is it accessible?
  - Alternative access options
- Is it free?
  - Clearly outline subscription
- Is it legal?
  - Clarify policies and disclaimers
- Is it difficult?
  - Set up a rating scale
- Will it look after itself?
  - Suggest maintenance needs
- How long does it take?
  - Time the testers

### Issues

**Issues for institutions**
- Cultural implications
- Social and generational issues
- Socio-political concerns

**Issues for ICT designers**
- Maintenance – staff time and skills required
- Relevance – keeping content useful and timely

**Issues for users**
- Accessibility – text transcripts, info on file size
- Interaction – subscription, posting questions, blog, folksonomy
Potential outcomes

Collaborate with existing projects
- MyUWA, iPoint, Raiser's Edge, UniLink, NODE, Lectopia/iTunesU etc

Initiate and integrate new tools
- (e.g.) Facebook, vokis/Sitepal, Google maps, Flickr, votapedia, Second Life
- Virtual one stop shop?
- Targeted messages to student cohorts (via SMS, RSS, Facebook?)
- Animated characters as campus guides, student advisors, peers etc

4. 10 tiny details

1. stay on time
2. be in charge
3. be sincere
4. practice needs feedback
5. visit the venue
6. engage; don't read
7. use graphics
8. use ‘sign-posts’
9. simplify with confidence!
10. take ‘papers’

Feedback