Making Good Presentations

Uday Khedker

(uday@cse.iitb.ac.in)

Department of Computer Science & Engineering

IIT Bombay

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Outline

- Types of Presentations
- Elements of Good Presentations
  - Form
  - Content
  - Delivery

Types of Presentations

- Many kinds of Presentations :

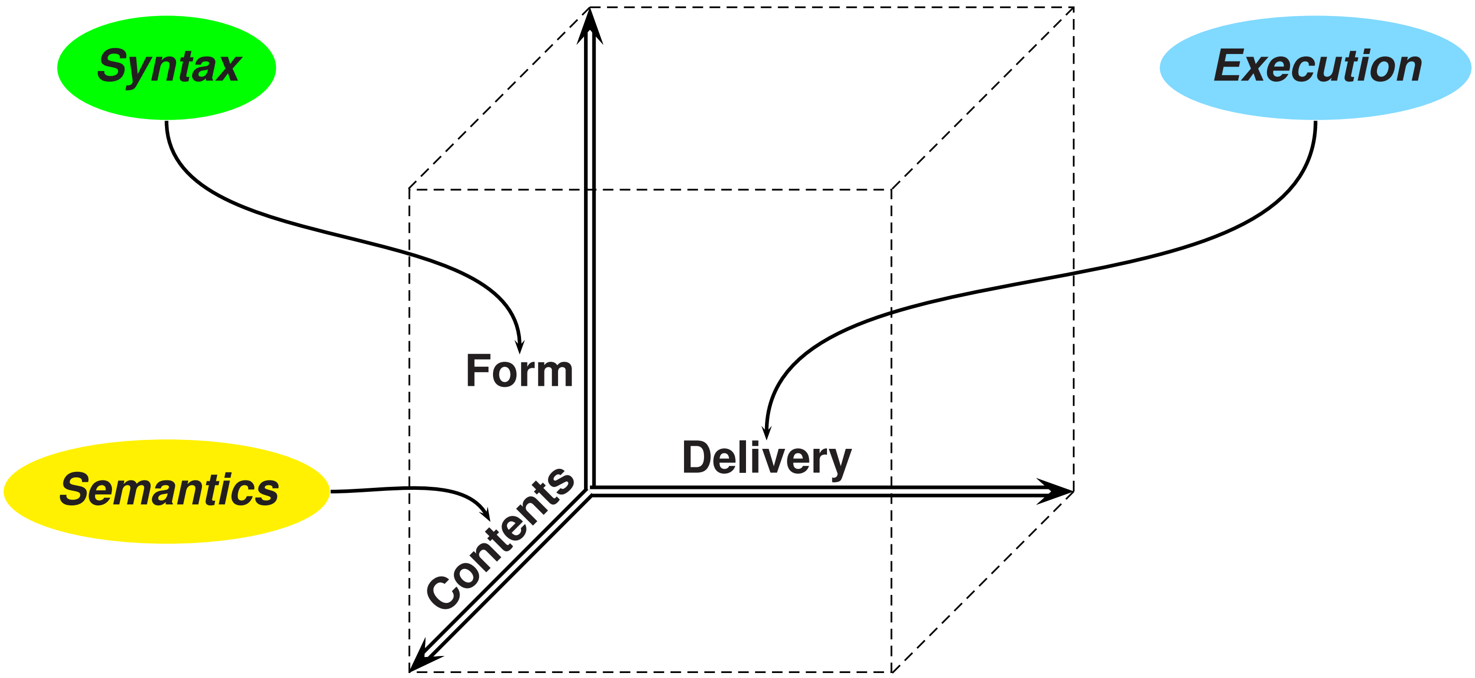
  Sales, Motivational, Technical

- Many forms of presentations :

  Narratives, Descriptive, Analytical, Persuasive

Scope of this talk : Technical (usually Analytical) Presentations

Constituents of a Good Presentation



Part I : Good Form

Form = Structure = Syntax = Organisation

- Tell them what you are going to tell them
- Tell them
- Tell them what you told them

Form = Structure = Syntax = Organisation

- Tell them what you are going to tell them :

  Opening (15% to 20% of the total duration)

- Tell them :

  Middle (65% to 75% of the total duration)

- Tell them what you told them :

  Ending (10% to 15% of the total duration)

Opening (15% to 20%)

Set the expectations right

- Topic : Theme of the talk
- Outline : Plan of the talk
- Introduction : Motivation, Perspective, Scope, and Focus

Introduction (Around 15%)

- Motivation :

  Why is the talk important/relevant?

  Why is the talk of interest to you? To the audience?

- Perspective : How does it fit in the larger scheme of things?
- Scope : What are the things you restrict yourself to?
- Focus : What is the key idea?

How About This Introduction?

"We worked in Computer Science. We proved some theorems. Some were big, some were small. Big theorems had big proof, small theorems had small proofs. We tried to connect the proofs to the theorems. Sometimes we succeeded, sometimes we didn't. By then, the time for this talk had arrived, so here I am . . . "

Based on "*How to Have Your Abstract Rejected*" by M. Leunen and R. Lipton

http://www.acm.org/sigplan/conferences/author-info/vanLeunenLipton.html

Middle (65% to 75%)

Development of the key idea(s)

- Origin of the idea : Observations/experiments/puzzles/mysteries
- Evolution of the idea : Gradual movement across levels of abstractions

Middle (65% to 75%)

- Gradual movement does not necessarily mean sequential flow of ideas

  Twists and turns highlighting interesting insights are welcome

  - False starts, interesting dead ends,
  - Difficulties encounterd/overcome/succumbed to,
  - Rays of hope/light at the end of the tunnel

- Keep relating to the key idea(s)

Ending (10% to 15%)

Conclusions

- Important observations
- Lessons learnt : Your opinions on the matter
- Unanswered questions, open issues
- Future direction of work

Part II : Good Contents

Planning Your Contents

- Know your subject well
- Know you audience well
- Know the expectations of the audience well

Contents : Guiding Principle

- What ever you present should be relevant to the audience
- What ever you present should be accessible to the audience

If that doesn't happen, perhaps there is no need to present it . . .

How to make it happen?

Planning Your Contents

- Good contents have the following characteristics
  - Relevance
  - Precision
  - Clarity
  - Coherence
  - Simplicity
  - Accessibility

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- Don't hide behind the symbols/formulae/definitions

  Bring out the intuition/meaning clearly

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- Don't throw a lot of information. Present knowledge

  Information : Collection of Facts

  Knowledge : Co-relation between Facts

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- Don't merely present the knowledge contained in your references/sources.

  Present your understanding of what the references/sources have to say

  . . . and a justification why it is relevant/meaningful.

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- Use abstractions/analogies skillfully

  Don't give too many details

- Use examples liberally

- Use pictures

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- Distinguish between opinions and facts

  In a technical talk, the only place for opinions, most often, is in conclusions.

Contents : DOs and DON'Ts

- No sales talk :

  Limitations, Unknowns, Uncertainties are important and must be stated clearly and precisely.

- Bring out relevance/importance realistically.
  - Practical application
  - Theoretical significance
  - Aesthetics/beauty/simplicity

Part III : Good Delivery

Delivery

Objectives : Engage the audience

- Presentation aids
- Voice Modulation
- Movement
- General Interaction

Practice is the key to good delivery

Presentation Aids

- White/Chalk Boards
- OHP, Transperancies
- Data Projector
- Slide Projector

Can I Make Handwritten Slides?

- Must be neat and clean
- Use Overlays (Don't cover parts of slides)
- Use Placement Marking to avoid wrong orientations when placed on OHPs

Computer Based Presentations

- Can be updated regularly
- Naturally look neat and clean
- Precaution to be taken :

  Avoid too many animations

  (Particularly those with opposite kind of movements.)

Other Presentation Aids

- Handouts
- Pointer
- Microphone(s)

Voice Modulation

- Use Emphasis, Pauses, Suspense intellegintly
- Useful tips
  - Calm down and compose yourself for at least a few minutes before the start of the presentation
  - Ensure (sufficiently) deep and full breathe continuously

Movement

- Beginning of an important point : Go close to the board
- End of an important point : Go close to the audience
- Any interaction with the audience : Go close

Anxiety and Confidence

Plan, Prepare, and Practice and trust positive feedback

- The best way of overcoming anxiety is to try and hide anxiety
- The best way of gaining confidence is to fake confidence

General Interaction

- Be Open, Warm, and Positive
- Genuine interest in, and respect for, the audience
- Eye Contact
- Handling Questions

Conclusions

Making good presentations is easy. You need to have

- Confidence
- Knowledge of what you know and what you don't
- Awareness of the elements of good presentations

  Form, Contents, Delivery

Just Plan, Prepare, and Practice!

Thank You

Useful URLs

- Collection of useful links on making presentations

  http://www.support4learning.org.uk/jobsearch/interviews.htm

- Making slides using LaTeX

  http://www.cse.iitb.ac.in/ ˜uday/latex