



GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

During the Erasmus radiography exchange program you have the opportunity to study an aspect of radiography in one of the centres which participate in the group. Obviously during the three months you will learn about your chosen subject in quite some detail, but you will also be learning other skills which you may not realise.

In each of the participating centres, the teaching methods which are employed may vary quite considerably from those you are used to. You will therefore be able to experience different learning strategies during the exchange. When you go home you may find that you approach your studies differently because of this.

Another feature of the exchange period is that you will all be expected to give a presentation on arrival in the host institute and after the exchange in your own institute. This allows you to develop language skills and confidence, whilst maintaining a student centred focus within the various programmes. It also helps to spread knowledge and understanding across all the centres.

Some of you will be very familiar with making a presentation. Others may never have done this before. For some it will be the first presentation in English. For others, it will be the first time to speak in a strange environment to people you do not know so well.

The aim of this document is to give an overview of the subject, and some practical tips to help you improve your presentation skills. There is no such thing as a "right way" and a "wrong way" to approach a presentation so, apart from the prescribed content, don't think you have to stick absolutely to these guidelines. Use them as a reference, and then develop your own style.

We all look forward to listening to you!

1. CONTENT and DURATION.

Presentation to host institution during exchange:

- Introduction to home country and town/university.
- Typical customs or student activities.
- Broad overview of health services in home country e.g. National Health Service (NHS), private, insurance funded.
- Overview of the radiography education programme.
- Role of the radiographer – a typical day in the imaging or radiotherapy department.

Presentation to home institution after completion of exchange:

- Overview of the ERASMUS programme offered in the host institution and the mix of students participating.
- Report on the academic component of the course.
- Report on the clinical experience.
- Comment on any differences or similarities observed in professional practice compared with the home experience.
- Information about cost of living and travelling.
- Explain why you would or would not recommend this exchange to other students.

Both presentations should have a maximum duration of 15 – 20 minutes.

You may use video, slides, powerpoint or overhead projectors and may bring pictures or postcards to illustrate your presentation.

When you are travelling with fellow students from your institute you are allowed to prepare and present together.

2. WHERE TO BEGIN?

Before we look at the preparation of a short talk, let's consider some of the basic facts you need to find out before you start.

What do I have to talk about?

In this case the subject is given, but how much do you know about the topics? Remember the less you know, the more preparation time you will need.

What level is expected?

To determine this you need to talk to the people who are teaching you in each of the centres. It can be useful to find out who you will be speaking to and how much they know about your subject. In any case you should try to present to the top level of your own understanding, but explain carefully any points that you believe your audience are not familiar with.

How long is the presentation?

No matter what type of talk you have to give, you will be allotted a specific amount of time (15 – 20 minutes in this case). It is important that you plan your talk with this in mind.

In a ten minute talk, you'll have time to deliver about 1.000 written words. With visual support, you'll be able to cover about seven or eight slides, or four overhead projector transparencies. If you try to cover more than this, you'll either talk too fast, or you'll run over time. (And remember what it feels like when a teacher runs over time in a lecture!).

Where is the presentation?

Before you present find out in which room it will be and what resources are available to you there. That way you won't be caught out expecting to be able to use, for example beamer and then when you arrive you find the room only has an overhead projector.

OK, those are the basic questions answered. Let's consider next the structure of your presentation.

3. PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

Mark Twain, the American novelist, was world famous for his entertaining and enlightening lecture delivery. His guiding principle has been re-written many times:

"Tell 'em what you're gonna say, say it, and tell 'em what you've said!"

In a study of undergraduates in **University College Dublin** in 1992, students were asked to comment on what lecturers could do to improve their presentations. Maybe you'll agree with their suggestions:

"Be organised and prepared, smile, be relevant"

It seems, then, that a clear structure can help to make a good presentation. A suitable type of structure would be to have:

An introduction, which sets the direction

The information delivery, with constant review

A conclusion, which highlights the main point

A final summary, which reviews the whole presentation

Generally speaking, it's easier to break the presentation down like this when you're speaking for longer time periods. In a short talk, you need very careful planning to make sure you have time to include all the sections. In addition, you need to think which are the most relevant points of your talk so that you can spend more time there.

4. FITTING THE STRUCTURE TO THE TIME AVAILABLE

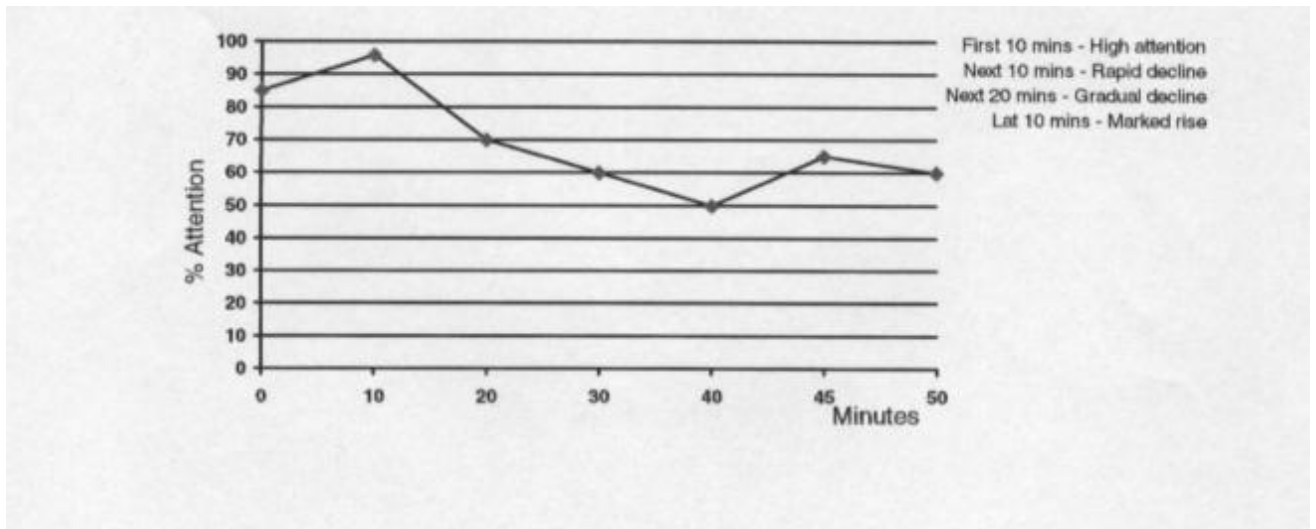
Let's look at the timing of a presentation from the viewpoint of the audience. The graph below shows how student attention varies during a fifty minute lecture:

By comparing this attention span with the suggested structure, you can see the importance of the introduction and the conclusion and summary - they are delivered when your audience is most receptive.

The middle part of any presentation is where you need to keep people interested by varying your method of delivery, introducing discussion etc.

All of that said, not all topics fit in with this kind of plan, and as we've noted already, short talks are harder to get right than longer ones. Structuring and timing a short presentation accurately gets easier the more often you do it. The best advice on this one is:

"Don't try to say everything about a subject, and practise, practise, practise "



5. DELIVERY

Now the content of your presentation is sorted out and structured, all you have to do is stand up and give the presentation! You might think that people who present well are just lucky, but in fact, they are probably as nervous as anyone. The trick again is thoughtful preparation and frequent rehearsal - if you do these you'll find giving the talk the easiest part of the whole process. If you're not used to giving presentations, there are a few points about delivery you should pay special attention to.

Get a friend to stand at the back of the room where you'll be giving the talk and make sure you can be heard. Your presentation voice needs to be a bit louder than your normal voice, and also a little bit slower. You don't need to be talking non-stop: it's perfectly acceptable to pause at natural breaks in your content. This enhances the structure of your talk for your audience.

Presentations are better received when the speaker speaks *to* the listeners, using eye contact and looking around the room rather than reading from a sheet of notes. This can be quite difficult if the presentation is not in your own language, but again, practice makes perfect.

If you have any kind of habit like touching your hair or pushing up your sleeves, you'll do it more when you're nervous. Without realising it, this can be the aspect that the audience focuses on, rather than the content of your presentation. So, if you do have any idiosyncrasies, you should try to control them.

Lastly, any presentation can be enhanced by some type of visual support, but for the novice presenter, **visuals** are particularly important.

6. WHY USE VISUALS?

Visuals, in the form of slides, overhead transparencies, video etc. have many advantages. They can be used to illustrate a point or reinforce a statement, to attract attention, and to give structure to a talk. This is important not just for the audience but for the presenter as well. If the presenter has a visual to follow, there is less need to read from a set of notes, and so it is easier to talk directly to your audience.

Key Points for all Visuals

With overhead and 35mm slides, it is important not to have too much data crammed onto the screen. Have a list of points rather than lots of text. Make sure that the lettering is large enough to be read easily from the back of the room. It's easier to read a combination of upper and lower case lettering than A WHOLE LINE OF UPPER CASE LETTERS. If there's a particular point on a slide you want to emphasise, try a different colour or font. When planning the content of the slide, always have the heading visible so that the audience can see the topic area, and structure the points so that you don't display anything you haven't talked about yet. As an example, the main points of this paragraph are put on the next page.

7. CHOOSING THE VISUAL

Obviously the major deciding factor in choosing what type of visual to use is going to be availability. To find out you can contact your host institute.

After that, you should consider what type of visual will best suit the job you have in mind. Here are some factors which relate to OHP transparencies, 35mm slides, and data projection.

Using Over Head Projection (OHP) transparencies

These are quick and simple to prepare and can be used in normal room light while the speaker faces the audience.

You should limit the content to one topic per transparency with a title, and have about 8-10 lines per transparency. The lower case letters need to be a minimum of 5mm high.

When presenting, the closest viewers should be twice the screen width away, otherwise the tilt of the machine will make the slide look like a keyhole. Some books will advise reading from the slide and pointing to it, but this can be very glaring on the eyes and many people find it easier to read from the wall or screen, and point to the wall rather than the projector.

KEY POINTS FOR ALL VISUALS:

- Less is more
- Upper and lower case lettering
- Lettering large enough
- Colour for emphasis
- Heading always visible

Using 5mm slides

Slides need advance preparation and dimmed room lighting which prevents note taking. However, for images the quality is far better than anything you can produce on an OHP.

When preparing script for slides, type in the centre of an A4 page, with the area of the text not more than 10cm x 15cm in a format 2:3 (^ : ->). Again don't use all capital letters. Typescript must be about 4-5mm high, or can be enlarged on a photocopier.

When presenting, never let slides distract. Only show slides related to your talk. If you want to create a pause in your talk, put in a blank slide rather than a picture until you become more experienced at presenting.

Number your slides or and have them sealed into a carousel in order before you begin. Its a good idea to number the slides so that if the carousel does open and the slides fall, you can easily re-order them at the last minute.

Using Powerpoint

This computer package combines the easy preparation of OHP transparencies, with the high quality of 35mm slides.

The layout and sizing of the text is pre programmed so you don't have to worry about that, and there is an auto content guide to help you construct your presentation. Images can be incorporated into a Powerpoint presentation provided you have access to an image scanner or digital camera.

The help menu within Powerpoint is very comprehensive and gives full details on operating the programme.

You are advised to compress your Powerpoint presentations.

8. SUMMARY

These guidelines have covered some of the key points you should consider in preparing a presentation. As was said at the beginning, there isn't a "right" way and a "wrong" way. The main lessons are that a good presentation requires careful preparation and lots of practise. If you give time to those you'll find that on the day your presentation works very well and you might even start to like presenting.

Good Luck!