

Guidelines for Oral Presentations

1. Three main parts: Intro, Body, Conclusion (as in an essay)
 - Tell ‘em what you’re gonna say, tell ‘em, then tell ‘em what you told them
2. Speak with clarity, sufficient volume, & confidence
3. Make frequent eye contact with audience
4. Make your presentation more like a conversation
 - Try to imagine you’re having a conversation with a friend
5. Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse!
 - Rehearse your talk at least 5 times
 - Practice enough so that you will end on time
6. Don’t read an entire script from your notes
 - In your notes, only include keywords to remind you of important points
7. Be excited about your topic
 - If you’re not interested in it, neither will your audience
 - Point out something you found particularly interesting, unexpected, or funny
8. Dress appropriately
 - Leave the rock concert t-shirt and shorts at home
9. Avoid the questioning intonation
10. Avoid unnecessary fillers (“like”, “umm”, “uhh”)
11. If using visual aids, ensure they are easy to see (avoid the “Bad Graphics” mistakes)
12. End your presentation with a firm conclusion/summary
 - Don’t let your voice simply tail off, leaving your audience wondering whether you’re done.

Note Card Example #1: Bad

The Weibull distribution is widely used in practice (esp. in engineering) due to its versatility. In particular, it is widely used in the field of "life phenomena", particularly in the weakest link model. That is, consider an object consisting of many parts and death results (failure) when any of the parts fail. The Weibull distribution provides a good approximation to the lifetime distribution of such objects.

Note Card Example #2: Better

- Weibull dist'n
 - popular, engineering, versatile
- "life phenomena"
 - weakest link model (1 fail, all fail)
- Weibull good approx object lifetimes