# Checklist for Presentations

Also see the Github Gist, forked from Ooi Wei Tsang, kept by Min at: http://bit.ly/2mpDoNk

Also see the the excellent *Designing Science Presentations* text, accessible with old WING password `y%b…`. Ask Min for this password.

Overall Structure:

- Your should make the following four points very clearly in your presentation:
    a. The definition of your research problem
    b. The description of your approach
    c. Findings from your evaluation result
    d. The contributions you have made (most important!)
- Stay focused on the research-oriented components of your project.
- The standard flow of presentation is: Motivation ☾ Problem Definition ☾ Related Work ☾ Methodology ☾ Evaluation ☾ Discussion ☾ Future Work ☾ Demonstration ☾ Conclusion ☾ Q & A
- There is no need to spend much time on outline slides if you follow the standard flow as specified above. Use them (or simply a sidebar on each slide) to show the progress of your presentation instead.
- Despite the similarity in the flow, your presentation should not be a mini version of your report. Instead, pick out the important elements, frame them with the big picture and tell it like a story.
- Point forward and refer back at various points of your presentation so that the audience can know what to expect and be reminded what has been said earlier.
- Summarize the important points at the end of each section and bridge into the next one.

Motivation:

- Explain why your research problem is important and interesting.
- A use case or motivating example works great in practice.

Problem Formulation

- Define your problem clearly (e.g., in terms of input, output) and state the assumptions.

Related Work

- Focus on a few highly relevant previous works instead of giving a comprehensive review. More importantly, relate them to your approach (i.e., why is yours better/more appropriate than theirs?).

Methodology

- Give an overview (e.g., architecture diagram) of your approach before move on to individual steps.
- Omit technical details as much as possible.

Evaluation:

- Basic elements of the evaluation section:
    a. Data – how did you get the data for evaluation? Does it come from an existing, reliable source? If not, what did you do to ensure it is appropriate?
    b. Metrics – how do you measure the performance of your baseline and
    c. Comparison (baseline) – do you have a baseline for comparison to show that your method is better? Is it reasonable (i.e., not too naive)?
    d. Results – what are the evaluation results of your method (and the baseline) based on your data and evaluation metrics?
    e. Discussions – How did your method perform (compared to the baseline)? Does it have its own limitations? What are the factors that contribute to the errors it made?
- Tables with many entries are always hard to read. Highlight the ones you want people to pay attention to or use charts instead.
- When working with charts, make sure your data points and difference in performance can be seen clearly.

Demonstration

- The purpose of the demonstration is to show that you did implement your method and it works in practice. Do NOT make your presentation into a tutorial session on how to use it.

Q & A

- Specify at the beginning of the presentation on whether questions will be entertained as and when, after each section or only at the end.
- When a question is asked by the audience, rephrase it to make sure you understand the questions clearly, then ALWAYS gives the shortest answer first, (e.g., “Yes” or “No”), before moving on to detailed explanation.

Miscellaneous:

- Color code your text and use animations to make important messages stand out. Make sure the colors contrast well with one another and the background.
- Show the slide number and the total number of slides.
- Reduce the amount of text in the slides. It helps the audience to focus on your talk instead of reading the slides.
- Use more pictures if possible to make your presentation more interesting.
- Avoid unnecessary gestures and sentence fillers. Pause if some thinking time is needed. Slow down at important sentences.
- Establish eye contact with the audience. Observe their facial expressions to see if they are confused. Do not be afraid to ask them directly whether they understand what you say.
- Be polite and greet the audience at the beginning.