

MAI4CAREU

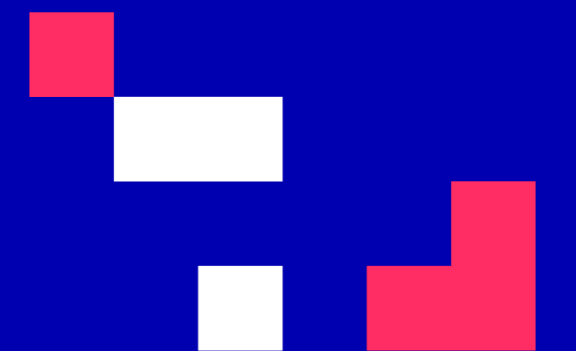
Master programmes in Artificial
Intelligence 4 Careers in Europe

University of Cyprus

MAI613: Research Methodologies and Professional Practices in AI

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Fall Semester 2022



Lecture 2: How to give a great talk

How to give a great talk - Contents

- Why bother to give a good talk
- Types of presentations
- Top 10 pointers for good talk
- A typical project talk outline
- Your audience
- Your key idea

“A successful talk is a little miracle—people see the world differently afterward.”

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Why bother to give a great talk?

- First impressions matter!
- There's no point doing good work if others don't know about it or can't understand what you did.
- Good practice for a teaching career! Good practice for any career!
- Helps you sort out what you've done and understand it better yourself.

Slides adapted from Margaret **Martonosi** and Iris **Bahar**. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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Types of Presentations

- Quick 1-minute “what I do” talk
- 25-minute conference paper presentation
- Project presentation (i.e. contest, poster presentation, events)
- Thesis defense
- Job talk

What they have in common:

- Never enough time to talk about everything
- All of them reflect on you & need practice/polish
- Focus on a clear goal and message

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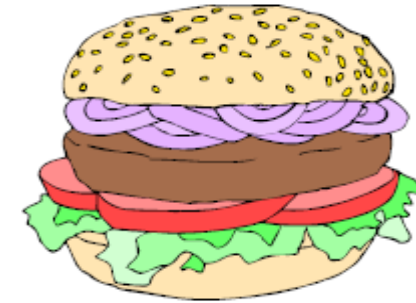
Research is communication

- Think how often did you say: “I am really glad I went to that talk”
- Why you should listen to a talk:
 - Networking with other researchers working on this field
 - Listen to some ideas that can help you on your research

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

Lecture 2: How to give a great talk**What your research talk is for:**

- Your paper = **The beef**



- Your talk = **The beef advertisement**

Do not confuse the two

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge,
1993

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The purpose of your talk

- The purpose of your talk is **not**:
 - to impress your audience with your brainpower
 - to tell them all you know about your topic
 - to present all the technical details

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge,
1993

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The purpose of your talk

- The purpose of your talk **is**:
 - to give your audience an intuitive feel for your idea
 - to make them foam at the mouth with eagerness to read your paper
 - to engage, excite, provoke them
 - to make them glad they came

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Your audience:

- The audience you **would like**:
 - Have read all your earlier papers
 - Thoroughly understand all the relevant theory of your presenting paper
 - Are all excited to hear about the latest developments in your work
 - Are fresh, alert, and ready for action

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge,
1993

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- **The real audience** would:
 - Have never heard of you
 - Have heard of your research, but wish they hadn't
 - Have just had lunch and are ready for a doze

Your mission is to
WAKE THEM UP
And make them glad they did

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Examples are your main weapon:

- To motivate the work:
 - To convey the basic intuition
 - To illustrate the idea in action
 - To show extreme cases
 - To highlight shortcomings

*When time is short, omit the general case,
not the example*

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Top 10 pointers for a good talk

1. Be neat
2. Avoid trying to cram too much into one slide
 - Don't be a slave to your slides
3. Be brief
 - Use keywords rather than long sentences
4. Avoid covering up slides
5. Use a large font
6. Use color to emphasize

Slides adapted from Margaret **Martonosi** and Iris **Bahar**. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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Top 10 pointers for a good talk

7. Use illustrations to get across key concepts
 - May include limited animation
8. Make eye contact
9. Be ready to skip slides if time is short
10. Practice

Slides adapted from Margaret **Martonosi** and Iris **Bahar**. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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A Typical Project Talk Outline

- Title/author/affiliation (1 slide)
- Forecast (1 slide)
 - Give gist of problem attacked and insight found
- Outline (1 slide)
- Background
 - Motivation and Problem Statement (1-2 slides)
 - Related Work (0-1 slides)
 - Methods (1-3 slides)
 - Explain your approach; illustrate algorithm

Who am I?

Why is it important?

What have others done?

What is my approach?

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A Typical Project Talk Outline

- Results (2-6 slides)
 - Present key results and key insights. This is main body of the talk, but don't try to show ALL results
- Summary (1 slide)
- Future Work (0-1 slides)
- Backup Slides (0-3 slides)
 - Optionally have a few slides ready to answer expected questions.

Slides adapted from Margaret **Martonosi** and Iris **Bahar**. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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Your Key Idea

If the audience remembers only one thing from your talk, what should it be?

You must identify a key idea. “What I did this summer” is No Good.

- **Be specific.** Don't leave your audience to figure it out for themselves.
- **Be absolutely specific.** Say “If you remember nothing else, remember this.”
- Organise your talk around this specific goal. Ruthlessly prune material that is irrelevant to this goal.

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

Lecture 2: How to give a great talk**Do not present related work****But:**

- You absolutely must know the related work; respond readily to questions
 - Acknowledge co-authors (title slide), and pre-cursors (as you go along)
 - Praise the opposition “X’s very interesting work does Y; I have extended it to do Z”

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Omit technical details

- Even though every line is drenched in your **blood** and **sweat**, dense clouds of notation will send your audience to sleep.
- Present specific aspects only; refer to the paper for the details
- By all means have backup slides to use in response to questions

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Other Things to Consider

- Oral communication is different from written communication
 - Keep it simple and focus on a few key points
 - Repeat key insights
- Be sensitive to your audience
 - The same talk may need to be adjusted for a different audience
- Make the audience want to learn more
- Handling Q&A is as important as the formal talk itself

Margaret Martonosi and Iris Bahar. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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How to Improve?

- Practice by yourself
- Practice in front of friends
- Practice in front of a webcam
 - Watch footage later... alone... as painful as that may be!
- Take note of effective speakers and adopt their successful habits

Margaret Martonosi and Iris Bahar. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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How to Present Your Talk?

- Your most potent weapon, by far, is your

enthusiasm



Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Enthusiasm

- If you do not seem excited by your idea, why should the audience be?
 - It wakes them up
 - Enthusiasm makes people dramatically more receptive
 - It gets you loosened up, breathing, moving around

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Write your slides the night before

- Your talk must be fresh in your mind
- Ideas will occur to you during the conference while listening to others' presentations
- Even better **polish it** the night before

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Do not apologise

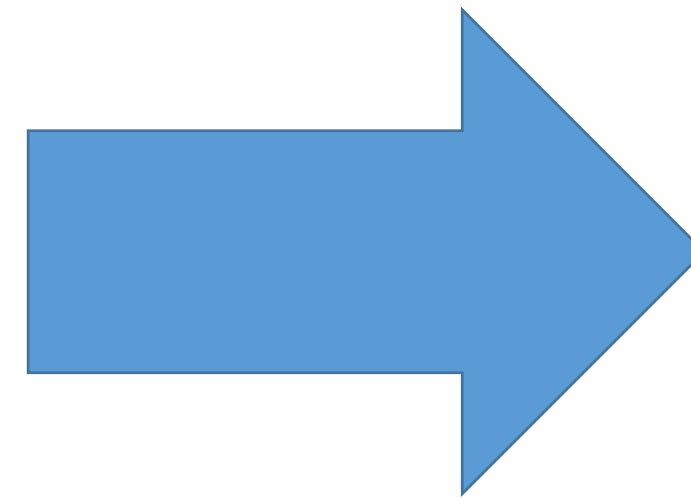
- “I didn’t have time to prepare this talk properly”
- “My computer broke down, so I don’t have the results I expected”
- “I don’t have time to tell you about this”
- “I don’t feel qualified to address this audience”

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Pre-talk Symptoms

- Excessive stress
- Fast or very slow breathing
- You think that you forgot everything
- Inability to stand up



- Script you first sentences (or memorize)
- Write the whole talk in notes
- Deep breathing during the previous talk

Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, 1993

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Questions

- Questions are not a problem

Questions are a **golden golden golden**
opportunity to connect with your
audience

- Specifically encourage questions during your talk: pause briefly now and then, ask for questions
- Be prepared to truncate your talk if you run out of time
- Better to connect, and not to present all your material

Margaret Martonosi and Iris Bahar. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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Finishing

- Finish on time
- Audience stop listening when your time is up
- Skip some slides and conclude

Margaret Martonosi and Iris Bahar. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

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Communication and your Career

- Expressing yourself technically helps you make and use professional connections wisely.
- You are joining a long-term community...
- Communicate your ideas to forge mentoring and technical relationships in the service of professional goals.



Margaret Martonosi and Iris Bahar. How to Give a Good Presentation. Princeton University, August 2008

Lecture 2: How to give a great talk**Do It! Do It! Do It!**

Good papers and talks are a fundamental
part of research excellence

- Invest time
- Learn skills
- Practice

Write a paper, and give a talk, about **any idea**, no matter how
weedy and insignificant it may seem to you

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Discussion

- Remember at least one presentation/talk that you really like.
 - How the speaker managed to keep you motivated?
 - Did you notice anything from the tips discussed?
- Do you think that body language is also important during the presentations?
- What do you remember from your previous presentations?
 - What do you like to improve?
 - How do you handle your stress before/during the presentation?

Lecture 2

Interactive Exercise

Work in pairs

- The person in the left to discuss their topic to the person in the right (5 minutes)
- The person in the right should ask questions (2-3 minutes)

- Repeat the same exercise standing up

- Any thoughts?

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Useful links for videos

- How to give a great research talk, Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sT_-owjKIbA
- TED's secret to great public speaking, Chris Anderson, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FOCpMAww28>
- The 3 Magic Ingredients of Amazing Presentations, Phil WAKNELL, TEDxSaclay, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoD8RMq2OkU&t=25s>
- What makes a great talk, great, Chris Anderson at TEDGlobal 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbbvUZOLTQY>

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Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility

This Master is run under the context of Action
No 2020-EU-IA-0087, co-financed by the EU CEF Telecom
under GA nr. INEA/CEF/ICT/A2020/2267423

