



Tips for Presenting Your Research at Conferences



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Overview – Academic Presentations

- ▶ Type of Talk
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Preparing Slides
- ▶ Presentation Tips
- ▶ Taking Questions



Type of Talk



- ▶ Usually 10-20 minutes
- ▶ Audience is usually students and academics
- ▶ Talks are categorized by topic (remember not everyone will know about your topic)
- ▶ Objective is to get people interested in your work
- ▶ Don't have time to present every detail – Presentation is a “bumper sticker”



Organization

- ▶ Similar to a good paper
- ▶ Golden Rule: Tell 'em what you'll tell 'em, tell 'em, and tell 'em what you told 'em.
- ▶ Each slide takes 1-2 minutes depending on speaking style



Outline of Conference Presentation

- ▶ Title/author/affiliation/e-mail address (1 slide).
- ▶ Motivation (2-3 slides). Similar to first few paragraphs of paper's introduction. For applied talk describe data and scientific objectives. For theoretical talk describe problem and limitations of current approaches.
- ▶ Outline (0-1 slide).
- ▶ Background information (1-2 slide).
- ▶ New Methods (4-5 slides). This is main body of talk. Don't just present numbers, but motivate them and interpret them to give insights.

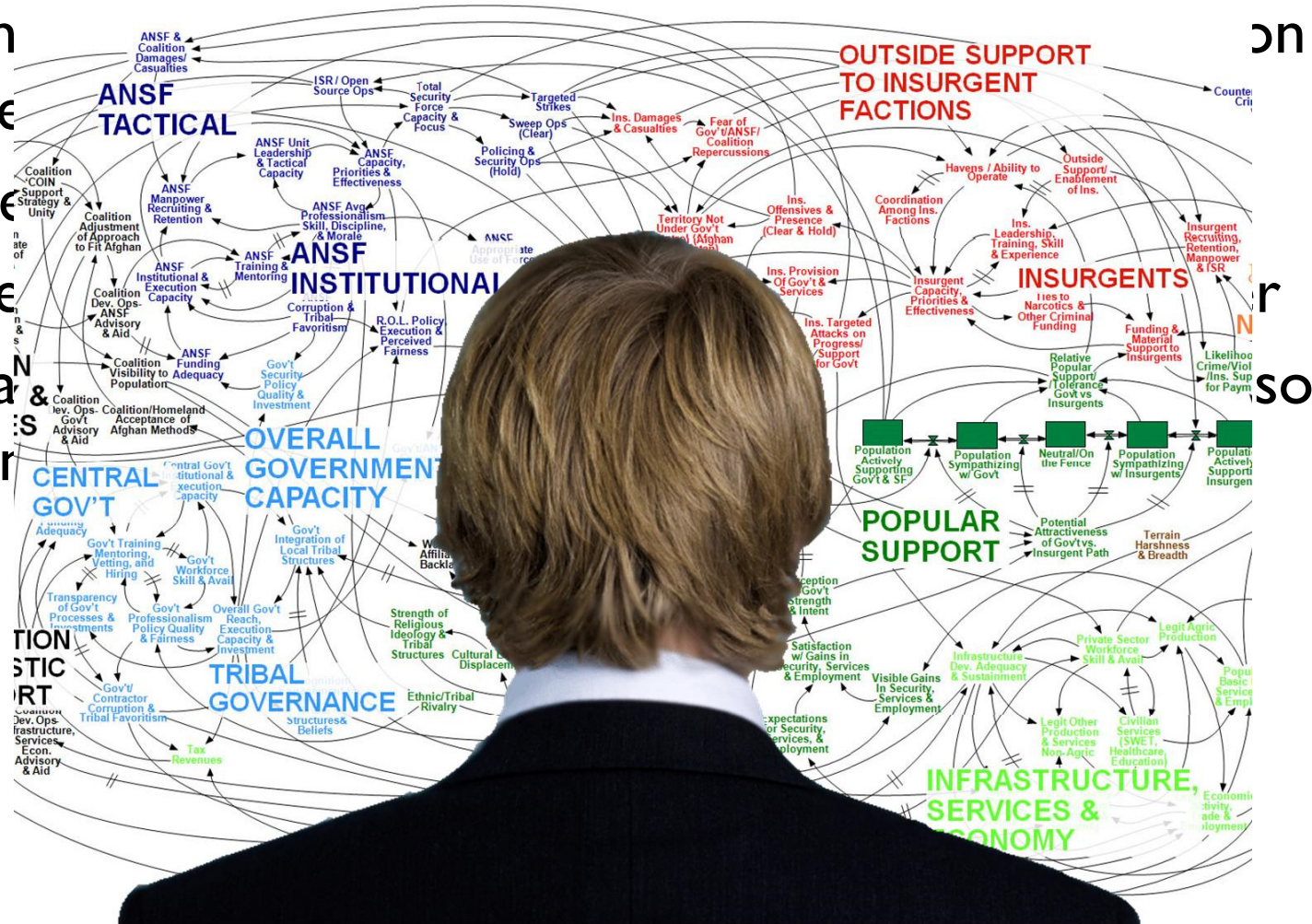


Outline of Conference Presentation

- ▶ Results (3-4 slides). Present key results of study or data analysis. Don't superficially cover all results; cover key results well.
- ▶ Summary (1 slide).
- ▶ Future work (0-1 slides). Optionally give problems this research opens up.
- ▶ Total of 10-15 slides depending on time.

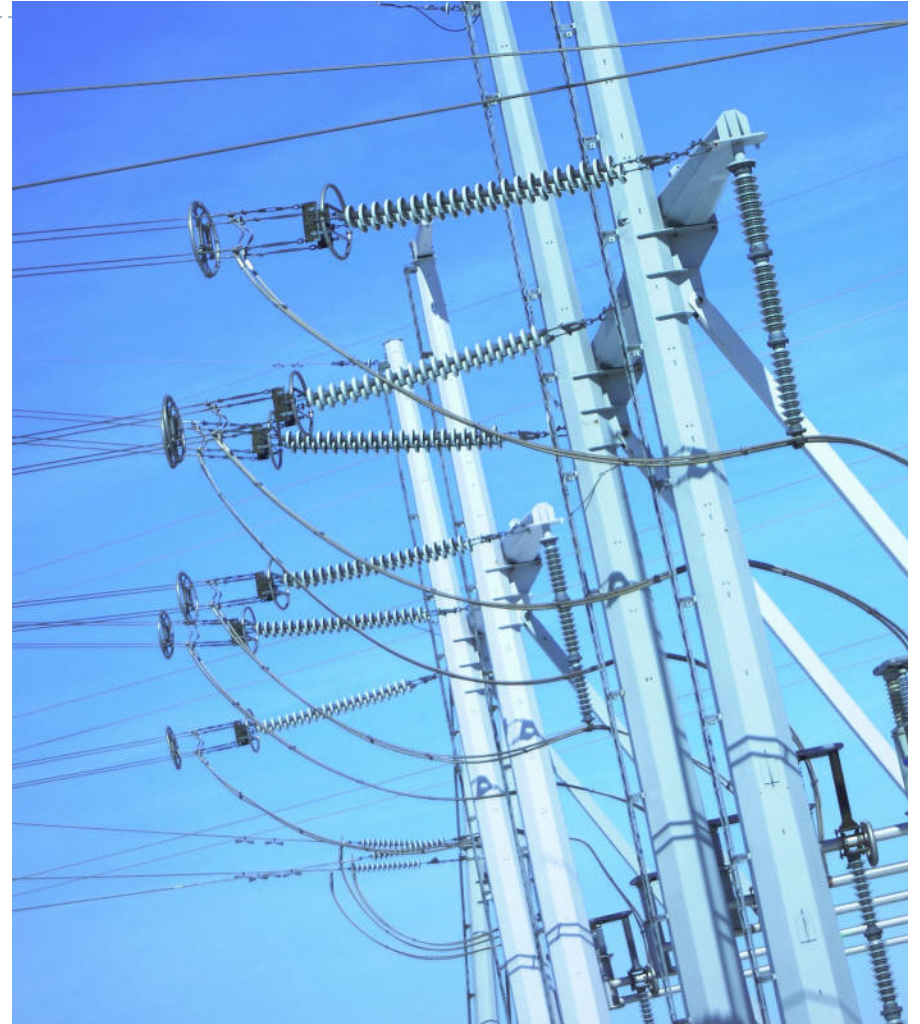


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Tips for Preparing Slides

- ▶ Organize slides to emphasize big picture
- ▶ Use short, clear bullet points
- ▶ Don't use complete sentences
- ▶ Fill in details verbally or refer to your paper



PowerPoint & Power Failure



Tips for Delivery

- ▶ Practice, practice, practice
- ▶ Don't rush through paper
- ▶ Stay within the time limit
- ▶ Dress appropriately
- ▶ Make eye contact with audience
- ▶ Make sure your presentation makes sense
- ▶ Don't apologize for being nervous or unprepared
- ▶ Check room before hand to become familiar with the environment
- ▶ Speak enthusiastically about your research



Tips for Delivery

- ▶ Talk to someone else who has presented and attended a similar event
- ▶ Remember to be confident and energetic
- ▶ Don't be nervous
- ▶ Present your product in a professional manner
 - ▶ Energy
 - ▶ Confidence
 - ▶ Natural
 - ▶ Dress appropriately



Don't Be Afraid to Surprise Us



Handling Questions

- ▶ Always repeat each question so everyone knows what was asked
- ▶ Always be respectful
- ▶ Avoid long one-on-one discussions
- ▶ Finish by asking person who asked that question if you answered it sufficiently for them
- ▶ If you can't answer questions that's alright. "That's a very good question. I hadn't thought of that before..."
 - ▶ Offer to research answer, then get back to the questioner later
 - ▶ Suggest resources which would help address question
 - ▶ Ask for suggestions from audience



Resources

- ▶ Hay, Iain, Kevin Dunn, and Annette Street. Making the most of your conference journey. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 29(1): 159-171.
- ▶ Hill, Mark D. Oral presentation advice. Available from www.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html (last accessed February 16, 2011)

