



## INTERNATIONAL WATER CONFERENCE®

The Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania

337 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Phone: (412) 261-0710 x 13

Fax: (412) 261-1606

E-mail: s.mueller@eswp.com

### Guidelines for a Good Presentation

Congratulations on being a Speaker/Author at the International Water Conference®. To ensure that your presentation is a success, we have prepared a brief list of ideas that will help you with both the design of your visual aids and your personal delivery skills.

#### **DEFINE YOUR OBJECTIVES**

What is the purpose of your presentation? To persuade? To inspire? To inform? To instruct? When it's all over, what is it that you want the audience to do? Most important - what is in it for the audience?

#### **DESIGN THE CLOSE**

Devote your creative energies up front to this important part of the presentation. Summarize your main points. You might consider memorizing the last 2 minutes so you go out with a bang.

#### **CREATE THE OPENING**

This is the second most important part of the presentation. A set-up for the close and a first impression of you. Consider memorizing the first 2 minutes to ward off butterflies and establish a flow.

#### **OUTLINE THE BODY**

What is your story? Support your case with reasons, facts, proof, examples, references, etc. Sample approaches (use several):

- Chronological
- Topical (arranged by subject)
  - e.g. water treatment, politics, transportation
- Categorical (arranged by categories within one subject)
  - e.g. water treatment: industrial, municipal, institutional
- Problem / Solution
- Comparison / Contrast
- Ideal versus Reality
- Feature / Benefits
- Old Way / New Way
- Advantages / Disadvantages
- Goal / Roadmap (What's our goal and How do we get there?)
- Objectives / Answers

#### **CREATE CHEAT SHEETS**

Don't read verbatim from a script

#### **REHEARSE, REHEARSE, REHEARSE**

*Time yourself. The Conference Schedule is very full and you will help your Session Chair, yourself and your audience by not exceeding your allotted time (25 minutes for a PAPER, 20 minutes for a REPORT.)*

## DESIGN YOUR VISUAL AIDS

The virtue of visuals is that they demonstrate relationships, emphasize ideas, and clarify structure more quickly and clearly than doing without them. Basic rules for good visuals:

**Make your visual aids legible.** Here are simple suggestions to make sure that your visual aids will be seen easily.

- **FONT**

Use a sans serif font such as **Arial** or **Universal** instead of a serif typeface like **Times**. Sans serif fonts are easier to read.

- **SIZE**

Use 24-point type for **ALL CAPITALS** and

32-point for **Capitals and Lowercase.**

***Helpful Hint:*** Hold your slide up to the light at arm's length. Any words you can't read from that distance won't be legible when projected on the screen.

**Use contrasting colors.** For example, yellow or white lettering against a black, deep blue or green background. Too many colors in a single visual will reduce contrast and legibility.

**Keep them simple.**

- Round off numbers; cut decimal places. Substitute symbols for words: \$ for "dollars", % for "percentage of".
- Abbreviate where possible. Minimize words. Don't use complete sentences. Use bullets only.
- Use pictures, graphs, symbols and cartoons that relate to the subject. Translate numbers into charts, bar charts or graphs.
- Only one key point per visual.
- Put text you plan on saying in your notes, not on the screen. For example, if you plan on saying "Recommendations to enhance packed bed ion exchangers needing improved performance", your slide should state "Recommend improvement steps"

## ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Be glad your audience is asking questions; it shows that they're paying attention! By following a few simple steps, you will make the Q&A session pleasurable and informative for all audience members.

- Listen to the complete question. Then repeat the question into the microphone. This will help ensure that you've understood the question correctly and that all audience members have heard the question as well.
- Pause before answering. This will both give you time to compose your answer as well as make the questioner feel that their question was important enough for you to think about the answer.
- Answer only the question that's been asked - no more and no less.

## **CONFIRM YOUR AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT**

For your convenience, the IWC has a list of standard presentation equipment that will be provided in each Technical Session Room. In each session room there will be:

- A Computer with Presentation software
- Video Projection System (for computer-based presentations)
- Screen, Laser Pointer & Timer
- Lectern with microphone

Please note that these items will **NOT** be available

- ⊘ Hand held, wireless microphone
- ⊘ A second Video Projection System
- ⊘ Blackboards, flip charts and/or easels

## **FINALLY**

More important than the content of your message **IS HOW YOU SAY IT**. Your enthusiasm and commitment to your message is what will sell your ideas and contribute to the success of this year's conference.

**We look forward to your presentation!**