



Career Planning Resources for TECHNE- funded PhD Students

Presentation Practice

You might also like to use our presentation practice resources below to practice with colleagues or friends. To try out this activity get into groups and take it in turns to present and give constructive feedback.

Academic Presentations

The Presentation

Although the content of your presentation is important, a key objective is to find out if you can communicate well to a range of audiences. As a teacher, you could be supervising PhD students one day and running a workshop for Year 12 students the next. As a researcher you may be presenting to peers at an international conference or pitching for funding. It's important to try and demonstrate a range of communication skills even if you only have 10 minutes.

Preparation

Before you even open a new blank PowerPoint slide ensure that:

- PowerPoint or the equivalent is allowed
- Ensure you are clear about: duration, does it include time for questions, do you need to send it in advance, how many back-up handouts are needed, what is the size and composition of audience. Be enthusiastic!

Delivery

Read the rubric carefully. You could be asked to talk about your current or recent research, future plans to generate grant applications or deliver all or part of a current teaching session.

- **Anticipate questions:** give your presentation to someone who knows your field and someone who doesn't and ask what questions they might ask you
- **Show a range of communication skills:** hiding behind a lectern or computer terminal will not show you can build rapport and interact with your audience; breaking up your talk with an activity will.
- **Vary your communication style:** particularly important if you have a longer time or more than about 20 minutes. For example, vary the tone of your voice, break up statements with rhetorical questions.
- **Balance:** essentially stay within your comfort zone in terms of topic and tone, but take the opportunity to show what you can do and do it well.
- **Audience:** you may have a mixture of experts in your field and non-experts, so tailor content accordingly. It's important to be flexible as some people may only decide on the day to

attend; you can always start by asking for a show of hands as to their background. Have a simple explanation of your research to hand.

- **Practice!** ...so that you get used to hearing yourself deliver the content and you get the timing right.

See www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/ for further tips.

Remember that the [TECHNE Whatever Next? Career Development Programme](#) offers career support including:

- [1:1appointments](#) with a TECHNE dedicated Careers Consultant
- [webinars](#) on topics such as developing a portfolio career, job interviews and using LinkedIn
- [workshops](#) on topics such as CVs and cover letters for academic and non-academic jobs, academic and non-academic careers, and networking

Presentation Practice

Instructions for the Presenter

- You have 5 minutes to prepare a talk on your research
- You will not have the use of visual aids on this occasion
- You must make what you say accessible to a non technical audience
- Your presentation must not last more than 5 minutes

Key Things to consider:

How will you structure your presentation?

What are the key themes?

How can you also get across your USPs / key achievements?

Can you also demonstrate your research qualities?

How many specific points can you feasibly get across?

How can you make what you say interesting and engaging?

Instructions for Presentations Panel

During the Presentation, analyse the following:

Content

- Are you clear on why the work was done?
- Was the language too technical?
- How many key facts can you remember at the end of the talk?
- Was there too much information?
- What are the key achievements / USPs?
- Do you get a feel for how this person approaches their work & what might they be like to work with?

Structure & Delivery

- Was there a clear introduction and summary at the end?
- How many key points were raised?
- Was the speaker clear and easy to understand?
- Were they interesting and engaging – why?
- What sort of visual aids and supplementary material would have been useful?