

## **A guide for preparing clear and concise oral presentations within 9 minutes**

Due to the high request for oral presentations, the ATR board has decided to constrain the available time for oral presentations to 9+1 minutes. Within this framework, this guide is meant to be friendly advice on how to focus your oral presentation on the key contents but should not be viewed as constraining rules to retain the individuality of presentations.

### **1. Focus on your take-home message**

The main aim of an oral presentation is to communicate a clear and easy to understand take-home message. That means you should avoid presenting contents which are only marginally connected to the take-home message. Recall, that your presentation is one out of many others and you want to make sure that the audience keeps your main message in mind.

### **2. Think visual not textual**

Prioritize figures over text. Use bullet points to summarize the main points of a slide. Don't overload slides with too much information (neither text nor figures).

### **3. Guide the audience**

A concise slide – or even a single sentence – describing the general framework of your study at the beginning of your presentation helps the audience to immediately situate your study within the relevant context. Structure your slides in a logical manner building up contents step by step. A sequence of several simple slides building up a content are easier to follow than single or few complex slides (see point 2). Highlight important contents and avoid emphasizing on minute details (unless they are crucial). Include slide numbers to assist in asking questions and/or practicing the presentation (see point 6).

### **4. Presuppose knowledge and expectations**

For such a short presentation avoid slides presenting the outline of your talk. Methods should focus on the specifics of your study, such as the underlying data (site, species, proxy) and a **brief** outline of your methodological approach. At TRACE you can expect a solid background knowledge in tree-ring research while at any conference you can't expect a novel and complex methodological approach to be understood within 2-3 minutes. If spending too much time about obvious or very-hard-to-grasp methods it is likely to lose the attention of the audience. Thus, rigorously constraining the methods saves time and keeps the attention of the audience at a high level. Moreover, given the time constraints your **emphasis should be on results and discussion**.

### **5. Make use of supplementary slides**

Things which are only marginally related to your take-home message or too complex to explain within a few minutes but may yet be potentially relevant should be moved to supplementary slides which are placed right after the last 'official' slide of your presentation. That could e.g. be a more elaborated version of the methods or results that indirectly help to support the main line of evidence. Perceive supplementary slides as an option for guiding the scientific discussion after your presentation towards contents you could not show because of time restrictions.

### **6. Practice your presentation sufficiently**

You should practice your presentation at least 5 times. Make sure you stay within the time limit. While practicing, take notes in case you recognize problems with a specific slide (use slide numbers) and revise your presentation accordingly. When you feel comfortable with your presentation, practice in front of your colleagues or friends. They may spot issues you haven't thought about.