Creating Your Proposal Presentation

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Overview

- Goals and components of the Module 3 Presentation
- Planning as a team
- Delivering the presentation as a team
- Revising as a team

A proposal presentation has a distinct audience and purpose

Persuading evaluators to support your research project

- Assume that your audience comprises
  - experts in your topic
  - intelligent generalists with exposure to your field
- How can you make your proposal compelling?
  - Convince audience that project is worth doing
  - Convince audience that you are capable of carrying it out

Help your audience understand the motivation for your idea

- Broadly: What is the problem? What is its (social, scientific) significance?
- Specifically: How have you zeroed in on a well-defined research question?
  - What about your project is novel, relative to prior work?

Help your audience appreciate the merits of your approach

- Provide a clear overview of the scope of your plan
  - be realistic, not overambitious
- Propose pertinent experiments with good controls
- Explain your methods succinctly
- Demonstrate the kind of data you might see
  - show how they will illuminate your central question
- Offer alternative solutions/backup plan

12 minutes to cover...

brief project overview
sufficient background information for everyone to understand your proposal
statement of the research problem and goals
project details and methods
predicted outcomes if everything goes according to plan and if nothing does
needed resources to complete the work
societal impact if all goes well

Early decisions should be planned jointly

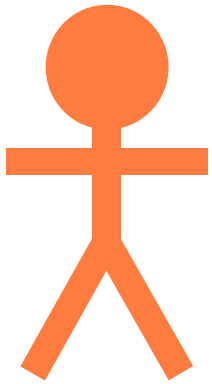
Discuss, pre-drafting:

- What to put in/leave out
  - What does audience need to know?
  - What do they not really need to hear?
- How to organize flow of information
- How much time should be allotted to each element of the talk
- Your assumptions
  - you know the project better than audience -- certain connections may make sense to you and not them

Be equitable in dividing the presentation, but don't distract from content

- Each partner should speak roughly the same amount of time
- Respect audience expectations: change in speakers should correspond to a change in topic
- Keep shifts to a minimum
  - changing speakers can distract audience/slow the talk down
- Many options for dividing the talk!
  - depends on the shape of your presentation..

Dividing up the presentation:
Option 1 (Down the Middle)



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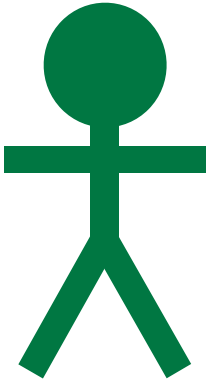
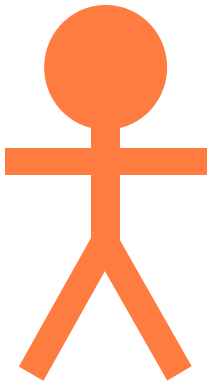


division assumes that Part I is roughly as long as Part II

Dividing up the presentation:
Option 2 (The Sandwich)



context = bread

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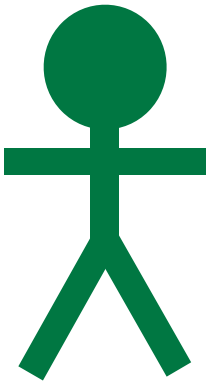
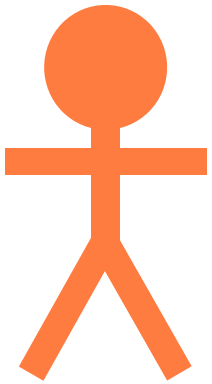


experiment nuts and bolts = filling

Dividing up the presentation:
Option 3 (Back and Forth)



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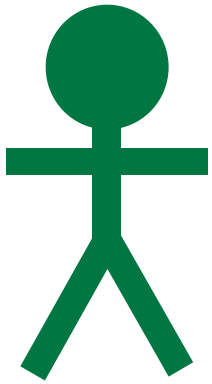

each partner speaks long enough to establish flow

More options (for specific kinds of projects)

- Two discrete research questions OR
- Two discrete methods
  - each partner follows one strand
  - introductory and concluding material each presented by a single partner
- Other possibilities, depending on the particulars of your material

Focus the audience's attention on the right speaker

- During overview, identify who will speak on what topic
- Review/Preview as you proceed through the talk
  - Articulate transitions explicitly -- "hand off"
- Only one partner "onstage" at a time
  - If you're not speaking, don't hover nearby
- Do not interrupt each other

Rehearse as a team

- Familiarize yourself with partner's material
- Note timing of each section and of talk as a whole
- Aim for similar speaking styles
  - don't imitate each other, but match formality/engagement levels
- Practice moving into speaking position at transition points
- Will you advance each other's slides?
- Practice Q&A

http://smu.edu/bobhope/images/ hope-crosby.jpg

Revision is an essential part of the collaborative process

- Be prepared: collaborative presentations require more revision than individual ones
- Invest yourself in the success of the presentation as a whole
  - don’t get too emotionally attached to your own contributions
- Rehearse before AND after you revise

Critique your presentation's organization

- Does our talk fit together as a coherent whole?
- Are all sections of the talk adequately developed?
  - Do we have a focused, well-defined hypothesis?
  - Is it clear **what** is going to be done and **how?**
  - Have we realistically articulated the scope of the work?
- Have we omitted extraneous material?
- Will our project fire up an audience's interest?
- What might make this proposal more convincing to a funding body?

Critique your presentation's slide design

- Is everything on the slide readable?
- Are our slides a good balance of text and figures?
- Have we chosen clear, specific titles that express the main point of each slide?
- Is the design/format of our slides consistent, or were they obviously designed by different people?

Critique your (joint) delivery

- Can we get through our entire presentation in 12 minutes?
- Do we know where to position ourselves, and how to coordinate our shifts smoothly?
- Do our speaking styles work well together?
- Are we making the transitions between topics and speakers clear to the audience?
- Is each individual speaker clear and understandable?

For more information

- Useful tips on creating funding proposals at http:// www.wwu.edu/depts/rsp/insideview.pdf
- Guide for Proposal Writing," National Science Foundation, 18 Feb. 2004, http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04016/nsf04016.pdf
- Andrew J. Friedland and Carol Folt, *Writing Successful Science Proposals* (Yale, 2000).