

## **Guidelines for Giving an Oral Presentation at an IRG Conference**

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Keep the presentation **simple** in both content and style. Put the emphasis on why the work is **important** and what your **conclusions** are.
- 1.2 Use plain fonts with light coloured text on a dark background.
- 1.3 Support your points with clear instructive visual aids such as 35 mm projector slides, overhead projector acetates or computer PowerPoint projected slides.
- 1.4 If using PowerPoint, use compressed graphics such as jpeg to reduce file size, which should be less than 2 MB. Save the presentation to floppy disk or USB Storage device, or if using CD-R, a standard file format. Save as a PowerPoint 'show' file (.pps file). Save the presentation using the IRG document number.
- 1.5 Give the clearly labelled (IRG number, author, title and section) presentation to the Convener of your working party or to the audio visual team as soon as you arrive at the meeting or at designated times given at the meeting.
- 1.6 Speak **clearly** and **slowly** for non-native English speakers.
- 1.7 Be **brief** - You will normally have only 10 minutes and five minutes after for questions and discussion. Do not 'read' your paper or give experimental detail – assume the audience has already read your paper and has these details.

### **2. Preparation**

- 2.1 Structure your presentation to include:
  - 2.1.1. A clear statement of the subject of the paper
  - 2.1.2. A very brief description of the approach and the results
  - 2.1.3. Points of impact and importance

#### 2.1.4. A review of the conclusions

### 3. Visual Aids

- 3.1 Good visual aids are vital at IRG meetings; use PowerPoint slides, 35 mm slides, or overhead projector acetates that will be easy for your audience to understand. They will enhance your presentation. The following principles apply equally to PowerPoint, slides or acetate overheads.
- 3.2 Basic Tool PowerPoint or 35 mm film slide. 5 x 5 cm (2 x 2 in) or Acetate. Ensure the message is clear and understandable.
- 3.3 Basic Principle Limit the number of points in each slide.
- 3.4 Colour
  - 3.4.1. Use colours to make the text easier to read. If the back-ground is black or a dark colour, use light colours for the text.
- 3.5 Legibility
  - 3.5.1. If you cannot read a 35 mm slide at arms length, it will not project legibly on the screen.
- 3.6 Text
  - 3.6.1. Use BIG AND BOLD easy to read letters. The text should be a summary of words and statements; maximum 1 or 2 points per slide.
- 3.7 Photos
  - 3.7.1. Use them to tell a story and support the overall presentation
  - 3.7.2. Only use them if they are in focus and the colour is good.
- 3.8 Graphs
  - 3.8.1. Make them BIG, BOLD and SIMPLE.
- 3.9 Data
  - 3.9.1. Avoid tables of data; consider a graph to summarise data.
  - 3.9.2. If data tables are necessary, make them big and bold and simple
  - 3.9.3. NEVER photograph tables from a book or other text with normal print size.

3.9.4. Final Reminder: It is better not to use slides or acetates in your presentation at all than to use poor quality, illegible ones.

3.9.5. Self-evaluation of presentation

3.9.5.1. Remember that you will often have only 10-15 minutes (possibly even less) for presentation at an IRG conference. Allow sufficient time for discussion at the end of your talk.

3.9.5.2. Practice the presentation orally using prepared notes or cards, preferably in front of someone. This familiarises you with the sequence of the talk and helps to decide whether or not you fulfilled your intentions. Is your speaking voice slow and clear?

3.9.5.3. Critically evaluate the presentation:

-The introduction and conclusions are the most critical parts; know precisely what you will say about these.

-Were the major points adequately explained?

-Were the statements presented clearly and logically, with proper emphasis?

## 4. Presentation

4.1 Hand in your slide carousel or PowerPoint file at the beginning of the meeting or at the specific time given at the meeting to do so. It should be properly labelled with IRG number (A list of document numbers will be provided on the IRG document CD-ROM prior to the meeting, or in the list of documents which can be found on the IRG website at: [www.irg-wp.com](http://www.irg-wp.com)) author, title and section. Ensure that all slides are the right side up and in the proper order in the projector.

4.2 Locate your section or working party convener at the beginning of the meeting. They will be pleased to meet you and will be able to confirm the time and place of your presentation as well as the time allowable for your presentation.

4.3 Arrive at the meeting room at least 10 to 15 minutes before your session. Locate your chairperson and let them know that you are present.

- 4.4 Become familiar with the operation of the projector, microphone and any other visual aids well before your presentation starts (e.g. the day before your session and out of allotted session times).
- 4.5 Avoid the use of brand names, organisation or company names and logos on slides and artwork, other than the title slide to show the affiliation of the author(s). Do not give a 'sales pitch'.
- 4.6 The presentation of a well structured and objective technical paper will do much to enhance your standing and that of your organisation.
- 4.7 Speak clearly and rather more slowly than normal. Remember a high proportion of the audience are NOT native English speakers; do not use slang or colloquial expressions.
- 4.8 Do not use profane or crude language or poor humour.
- 4.9 Use tinted blank slides where necessary. For those short parts of your presentation when you are not using slides, we suggest you project a tinted blank slide. This will not distract your audience but will help you make a smooth presentation.

## **5. Questions and Discussion**

- 5.1 Questions and discussion are an important part of IRG.
- 5.2 Repeat the question: people who ask questions may not have microphones. If they are in the front of the room, you will probably hear the question, but people in the back of the room will not. Some non-native English speakers may not have understood the question.
- 5.3 Answer the question that was asked. Be clear and be brief; there may be other questioners waiting for a chance to speak.
- 5.4 If you cannot readily answer the question, do not linger over it, invite the questioner to confer with you after the session.

## ANNEX

### 1. Detailed guidance in preparing Visual Aids

- 1.1 Always use horizontal format: Vertical slides will sometimes be lost because they will be partly off the screen.
- 1.2 A **bold plain font** such as Arial is much easier to read in a darkened room.
- 1.3 **Graphical data should be bold.** Use bold axis, data points and legends. A clear slide title will help. Use multiple slides rather than complicated figures. Highlight critical data where necessary.
- 1.4 Colour. Completely white backgrounds create a glare on the screen which is distracting and which tends to reduce legibility. Most office supply stores have pastel coloured papers which make suitable backgrounds. Their surfaces are often less than ideal, however, and it may be easier to work on a transparent material and then back it with coloured paper when shooting the slide. When using PowerPoint, choose colour combinations carefully and view your selections before the meeting.
- 1.5 To judge the legibility of photographic copy, view it from a distance of at least six times its longer dimension. If the important details are legible at this distance, they will also be legible when projected on the screen. Finished slides may be judged the same way; hold one up to the light at normal reading distance. Anything you have difficulty making out will be equally unclear on the screen.
- 1.6 Make sure your slides communicate what you want to tell your audience. Material which is easily read is still wasted if there is too much information or if it is in a form which can not be readily understood. Wherever possible, extract the pertinent information and present it in a dramatic manner such as a graph, bar chart or pie chart.
- 1.7 Make duplicate slides when necessary. If you will need to use a slide twice during your presentation, make a duplicate slide instead of asking the projectionist to back up and find the first slide.
- 1.8 Your presentation visual aids should be given to the conference organizers at the notified time prior to your presentation (normally the day before).

## 2. Slides and Acetates

- 2.1 The image area of a 35 mm slide is about 3.8 cm wide and 2.5 cm high, (1.5 x 1.0 in), so keep your copy in this 3:2 ratio.
- 2.2 Lines of script that are too close together tend to merge when projected. Minimum space between lines should be 1.5 times the height of the largest letter.
- 2.3 Minimum symbol height should be 1/25 of the total height of the artwork, which comes to 1.2 cm in the A4 format 21.0 x 29.7 cm or (8.2 x 11.6 in). Wherever possible, **USE LARGE SYMBOLS AND MORE SPACE.**
- 2.4 It is possible to prepare slide copy on a keyboard without departing from these rules. Double-spaced characters (10 characters per inch (2.5 cm) which is confined to an area 7.5 x 11.5 cm (3 in. high by 4.5 in.) wide and not more than eight lines, considering margins) will produce a legible slide.
- 2.5 Use slide frames with glass covers. These suit all types of projector, are best for automatic focussing systems and are least likely to jam in the machine. Do NOT mix glass mounted slides with non-glass slides.

## 3. PowerPoint

- 3.1 **Use standard fonts only;** the conference PC may not have extensive fonts loaded. This also applies to bullets, Word art, Clipart and other graphics. The IRG Organising Committee will try to ensure that all equipment is compatible.
- 3.2 **Avoid the over-use of animation.** This will improve the ease of understanding and compatibility with the computer equipment.
- 3.3 If photographs or micrographs are included, use a **compressed file format** such as jpeg or gif files. Do not use bitmap files. Note that PowerPoint, if using the 'Import from library' function, will tend to re-convert the file to its native format and resolution. **This can result in extremely large file sizes** if the presentation contains many photographs. Good presentation graphics can be obtained by using jpeg images with a compressed file size of 200kb. Use the 'Insert' command and select the file directly from the directory in which it is stored (i.e. Insert, picture, from file). As a guide, a ten-photograph presentation with text should result in no more than a 2 MB file size.
- 3.4 At the meeting, your presentation will need to be transferred to the conference computer equipment. It will not be possible to use your own notebook PC for presentation purposes at IRG meetings. It is strongly

recommended that you **save the file to CD-ROM**. CD-R is preferred to CD-RW.

- 3.5 Saving your presentation as a 'PowerPoint Show' can reduce the file size significantly. If you intend to transfer by floppy disk or USB Storage device, PowerPoint allows you to use the function 'Pack and go'. This is available on the main 'file' menu and allows transfer of presentations across several floppy discs. You will not need to include a 'copy of PowerPoint' on the disk when you save the presentation in this way. Also, saving as a 'PowerPoint Show' (.pps file) can save time when loading your presentation during the session.
- 3.6 Write the file in a standard data format and **avoid the use** of 'packet writing'. Packet writing is the format used to 'drag and drop' files directly to the CD. For example, the 'Roxio' or 'Adaptec' **Direct CD** programme is a packet-writing format. Use your CD writing software to create a standard 'data' CD-R.
- 3.7 **Do not use other disk formats** including ZIP files, as the relevant equipment will not be available to download the presentation to the conference equipment.
- 3.8 **Save your document where possible as the IRG document number** that it has been allocated. A list of document numbers will be provided on the IRG document CD-ROM prior to the meeting, or in the list of documents which can be found on the IRG website at: [www.irg-wp.com](http://www.irg-wp.com)

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