"How to Give a Good Talk: Finding and Keeping a Job"

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Talks are a matter of personal style
- Even great science can be delivered in a poor manner
- Science requires good speaking skills for both lecturing and teaching
  - Teaching helps build speaking skills, too
- Good speaking comes from clear thinking
  - A clear message with defined parts like a written paper
- Remember that every talk is a job talk
  - You never know who's watching
- Preparation is key
  - Practice, practice, practice
  - Get input from friends/colleagues especially outside your field
  - Revise and practice again
  - Remember 1 bad talk can kill a job opportunity
- A good introduction is key
  - Always introduce why your talk/science matters
  - Put it in context scientifically
  - Give personal perspective on why it's exciting
- Make sure your talk stresses how you are unique, especially across disciplines
- Before you talk research staff
  - Learn your audience so you can better connect with them
  - Do not just speak to experts in the room
- Show that you love your science and why
- Explain why you should be hired
  - You talk allows you to show your personality, curiosity, and that you can clearly convey your science and CONNECT your science to bigger picture issues
    - Show what you will bring to the table
  - Convey that you will be an ally to their department
    - A colleague, collaborator, co-conspirator, and friend
  - Explain that you can provide fresh strength once hired
    - Again, research your interviewers
      - What are they looking for? Needed courses?
      - Find a niche you can fill
        - Establish your role for them
      - Show you also care about their work
        - How does your work strengthen theirs?

- Show your likelihood of success
  - How will your science progress?
  - **Never leave it implicit – spell it out for them

When creating your presentation:
- Remember: CLARITY, SIMPLICITY, TONE, BEAUTY, EXCITEMENT
- Use clear but visually striking slides
- Titles on slides are important
  - Keep it simple and striking but not too vague
  - Think of a story book title, not an index reference title
- Images aid memorability
  - Also adds personal style
- Animations can help keep your audience focused
- Don't out rule music – it can wake up the audience
- No bulky text in bullet points – don't fill the slide with words
- Legible font and color
- Do not show pages straight from paper
- Don't dredge through details/controls/excessive data
  - Find central point for each slide
- Don't show anything that you don't talk about or fully explain
- Gracefully fill "white/empty space"
- Never more than 4 panels per slide
  - Keep it easy to focus on the main idea of each slide
- ONE THOUGHT PER SLIDE
- Use simple diagrams so as not to alienate the less experienced in your audience

A good talk can have:
- Clear layout, general plan the audience can understand
- Context – why is it interesting
  - Explain context right from the beginning
- Then – why is it interesting?
  - Why did you do this? Choose this approach? What's your role in the project?
    - Don't give your whole scientific history – edit it to fit the arc of your talk
- Give story of obstacles overcome
- High energy, maybe an element of surprise
  - Remember to modulate voice, emphasis
  - Find some theatre in your talk
- New results explained – make the impact OBVIOUS
- Give a substantial vision of the future (1/4 of the talk)

A good talk should <u>NOT</u> have:
- Expectations of massive prior knowledge
- Jargon
- A ton of data
    - Instead, data should be distilled, made palpable to audience
    - Quality not quantity
- Focus on only part of the audience
- All the work you've ever done
    - Instead, summarize breadth of experience selectively
- Expect audience to see implications of your ideas
    - Instead, always explicitly state it
- Poorly answered questions
- Casual, sleepy, boring tone/attitude
- Extraneous text
    - Instead, simplify – you want them to listen NOT read
- Slides that are read word for word
- Slides that are shown before you introduce them
    - You will lose attention to visualization of slide before they have the context for it

To keep the job, once you've been hired:
- Be a team player
- Build good relationships
- Publish and claim/define leadership in projects
- Collaborate
- Recruit coworkers that work well the program/project/department
    - Be selective: good personalities, effective science
        - Especially in the beginning – BUILD THE TEAM YOU WANT
- Start out saying "no" to non-job direct tasks, i.e., admin, committees, chairs
    - Be selective and do not overload yourself to the point it affects your ability to conduct your science
- Use advisors to build on any lacking skills

Notes by Casey Leffue, DTM.