Guidelines

Below are some guidelines for preparing presentations/posters - exceptions are always possible in specific cases. Prepared by Professor Robert G.H. Bunce, Professor Valdo Kuusemets, Professor Kalev Sepp and Elis Vollmer, MSc.

• The title should be concise and preferably not have rhetorical questions
• The first slide is very important as it gives the audience its first impression of you and your work
• It is often useful to have the three subjects that you are going to cover on the second slide
• Powerpoint has been a great improvement BUT it encourages people to put too much information on each slide.
• Do not use small fonts – at least size 18
• Allow one and a half minutes for each slide or half a minute if it is only a picture e.g. a 15 minute presentation should have ten slides
• Pictures can be used to help the presentation flow, especially if there is a lot of statistics
• NEVER say “if you could read this it says…” therefore always make sure that figures are readable
• NEVER apologize for anything
• NEVER tell jokes unless you are very experienced as they nearly always go wrong
• NEVER use animation because the software often goes wrong
• Always keep to time and preferably finish a bit early for questions
• If you are worried about time, do practice runs in front of a friend or colleagues
• Planning is essential – mind maps are useful for complex documents such as theses, but are not necessary for single experiments/one issue studies
• One figure/graph per slide and highlight critical values
• Try to prepare several days before and then revisit the text the day before
• It is useful to write long notes first and then reduce the length of the text
• Never more than four/five lines on each slide-preferably three and no more than two figures/graphs
• Keep them as bullet points and key words and shorten as much as possible-one line per point.
• Longer sentences possible if not using your own language.
• Do not use copy/paste texts taken directly from existing documents/reports/papers
• Do not just read out the points written on the slides-the audience can see and read them
• Face the audience, make eye contact and talk directly to them speaking slowly, clearly and not too fast
• For each slide try and add some information not written down – if necessary make short notes
• The last slide is important and should contain the take home message that you want the audience to remember